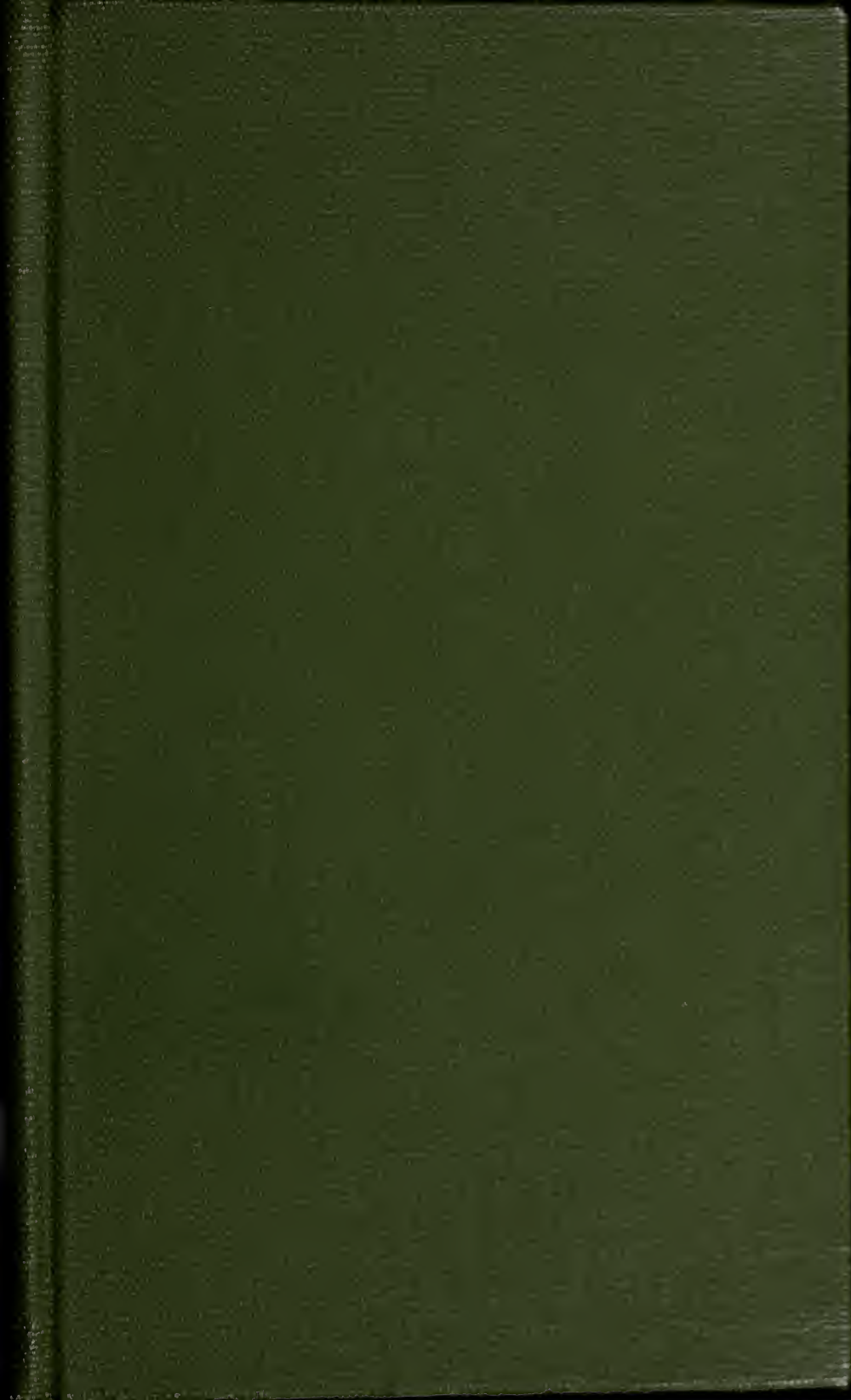




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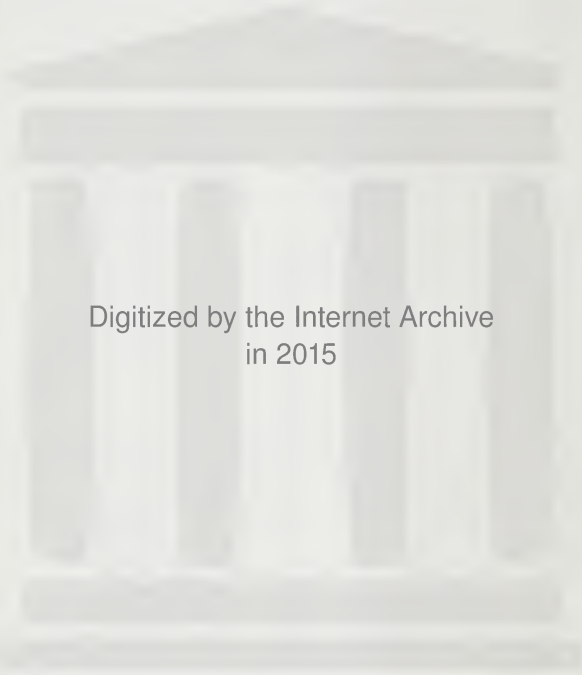
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CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION,

TOGETHER WITH AN

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF

READING,

WINDSOR COUNTY, VERMONT,

AND ITS INHABITANTS FROM THE FIRST SETTLEMENT OF  
THE TOWN TO 1874.

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BY GILBERT A. DAVIS.

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BELLOWS FALLS:  
STEAM PRESS OF A. N. SWAIN.  
1874.

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## P R E F A C E .

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The following sketches have been prepared by the editor except when the writer's name is given. The labor thus thrown upon the editor has been very great, and only such time as he could occasionally spare from engrossing professional duties, has he been able to devote to the task. Errors will undoubtedly be noticed but the details have been made as complete and accurate as possible. The plan was to give every family identified with the town's history, as full a history as the materials placed in the editor's hands would enable him to prepare — and this plan has been carefully carried out. If any family has been neglected, in this respect, it will be found that the proper and necessary facts have not been gathered and placed in the editor's hands. The old inhabitants of to-day are rapidly passing away, and with those already passed "over the river" have perished many reminiscences of the early settlement of Reading. The editor desires to express his thanks to the many respected citizens and friends who have interested themselves in this publication. The editor fully understands that at the low price at which the book is offered for sale, he will be pecuniarily a loser, but being interested in antiquarian and historical researches, and desirous that the facts pertaining to the early history of the town of Reading for whose inhabitants he has so much respect, should be placed in a form for preservation, he has undertaken and carried forward in his imperfect manner, the compilation of this volume; and if the present and former residents of Reading shall take pleasure in reading these pages, he will feel amply rewarded for his labors.

READING, Vt., Jan. 1, 1874.



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## READING CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION.

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Wednesday August 28, 1872, had been selected for the celebration of the accomplishment of the first one hundred years of the town's history. The day proved favorable and witnessed a gathering of some 5000 of the sons and daughters of Reading, and of those who felt interested in the exercises of the day. The procession formed in the early forenoon in front of the Felchville Hotel, headed by the Woodstock Cornet Band, and marched to the ground selected for the exercises, which was east of the Hotel on the meadow of Clark Wardner, Esq., easily accessible from the main street of the village of Felchville. Here a large tent was erected, filled with seats, with the speaker's stand on one side, and running around the tent was a line of tables loaded with a great variety of tempting articles of food prepared by the skillful hands of the ladies of Reading, and each table under the charge of its committee. Hot coffee and tea was served, and a long table spread with ancient table furniture, and well supplied with food cooked in "ye olden style." Brown bread, bean porridge, baked beans &c. tempted the appetite of those who were fortunate enough to reach this department. The tent was filled to the utmost, and thousands hung around the outside listening attentively to the speeches and proceedings.

Dr. W. S. Robinson, the President of the Day, delivered the welcoming speech ;

MR. MARSHAL—*Gentlemen of the Committee of Arrangements—Ladies and Gentlemen :* On taking position, as president of the day, I can but thank the committee of arrangements for the honor bestowed upon me on this occasion. Not being a speech making man, I will not occupy the time of others who are regular speakers and who have come a great distance to be heard and to hear from the old natives and former residents, making it a reunion of olden times, but will take this opportunity to say a word of welcome to the natives and former residents of this town who have gone forth in former years, into different parts of the country, to

seek fortunes for themselves and their families, and who have at this time returned to join with us in this the grand centennial celebration of the town of Reading. To them I say we extend a most *heartfelt* and *cordial welcome*. To others who have come to join with us, to them, also, one and all we give a most *heartly welcome*. Thanking the gentlemen of the committee of arrangements for the honor once more, will at once commence the long programme of the day by introducing the Rev. Mr. Small of this town, who will open the exercises of the day by prayer.

Prayer was then offered by Rev. J. S. Small.

After music by the band, Mr. Gilbert A. Davis delivered the historical address as follows:

#### LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

Reading to-day celebrates the one hundredth anniversary of its settlement. These ancient hills and streams, these smiling valleys testify their joy at the return of so many "to the manor born." From hill and vale, city and town, from states widely separated, and throwing aside important business, you have returned to the old hearth-stones—to this Mecca of your early love—to testify your veneration for the good old town of Reading. And in behalf of the citizens of old Reading who have given of their basket and store, and prepared this feast for the returning sons and daughters and all our kind friends here assembled, I have the honor to express, here and now, our cordial welcome to you, one and all. We trust to be able to demonstrate that the ancient reputation of Reading for generous hospitality has not become tarnished in our keeping.

Love for the place of one's nativity, for the scenes of childhood, for the old play grounds, school houses, playmates, the home of former years, for the old familiar hills and valleys, are all strongly exemplified by the mighty throng here assembled. Standing as we do upon the threshold of an expiring century in its history and the entrance to an unexplored and unknown future, to-day seems to be an appropriate time to gather up the facts pertaining to the history of this town. This task has been assigned to me; and aided by the labors of a committee, I present you the results of our researches.

The usual obscurity is characteristic of this early history; the records and files in the town clerk's office furnish but a few facts of general interest. Hence the difficulties that we have encountered. Nevertheless, materials for the sketch have come to hand so copiously that the difficulty has been to decide what of the historical incidents not to mention. I ask your attention briefly to such facts as I may have selected, and will endeavor not to have you think as the boy said of the minister, "he has left his amen at home."

The two monuments standing near Knapp's brook, in front of N. Persons' house, are familiar to us all. By careful examination the time-worn inscription can be read:

"This is near the spot that the Indians occupied the night after they took Mr. Johnson and family, Mr. Labaree and Farnsworth, August 30, 1754, and Mrs. Johnson was delivered of her child half a mile up this brook, August 31, 1754."

One hundred and eighteen years have elapsed since these events happened, and this monumental inscription brings to mind the dangers and sufferings of the early settlers of this country. So far as known, these suffering captives, torn from their home at Charlestown, N. H., and within the power of the savage Indians, were the first white persons who ever set foot within the limits of the town of Reading. To the town of Cavendish belongs the honor of the birth of this child. The old Indian, in whom by right of capture vested the title to Mrs. Johnson and her new born child, having in mind the ransom money for these two captives, rubbed his hands in glee and exclaimed: "two monies for me, two monies for me!" These Indians were the allies of the chivalric French, and Canada was their objective point. But one day's halt was made in Reading, and September 1st, the sorrowful journey was resumed. Their route was through South Reading (or Malagash) and over into Plymouth, encamping that night at the head of Black river pond in Plymouth. For the first two miles Mrs. Johnson was carried on a litter by the white captives, when from utter exhaustion they were unable to proceed further. The Indians assembled in council. The result was, Mrs. Johnson must proceed on horseback or be left with her infant to perish in the wilderness. The mother's love, hope, and courage, decided the issue. Mr. Labaree carried the infant, and the weary, sorrowful march was resumed. Every hour this poor mother was taken from the horse and placed upon the ground to rest, and then again the march was resumed, the Indians encouraged by the "monies," to be obtained for the ransom of their captives, and the captives suffering the pangs of hunger, weariness and anxiety.

No Indian tribes are known to have had an abiding place within the limits of this town. Few if any Indian relics have been found here, but this territory seems to have been a part of the hunting grounds and battle grounds of the tribes on either side of it.

Reading was chartered by Gov. Benning Wentworth of the Province of N. H., July 6th, 1761, to Zedekiah Stone and his associates to the number of 61.

Wm. Tryon, the royal governor of the province of New York, however, claimed jurisdiction so far east as the Connecticut river, and granted the same territory May 30, 1772, to Simon Stevens and others.

Simon Stevens was in those troublesome days termed a "Yorker," and undoubtedly obtained a share of this township to reward his fidelity to the Governor of New York.

The first settlers were Andrew Spear and family, who came to Reading from Walpole, N. H., in 1772. His land embraced the farm of Marcellus Bryant, and the log house first built by Mr.



Spear stood near Mr. Bryant's house. The precise date of Mr. Spear's arrival is not known. His deed bears date August 20th, 1772, and he then resided at Walpole, N. H. If he immediately started for his new home, the day selected for our observance cannot vary much from the time of his arrival in this town one hundred years ago.

Of Mr. Spear little information can be gathered. He pursued the independent and honorable occupation of a farmer. The forest fell before his manly strokes, and he lived to see a prosperous settlement, of which he was the pioneer. For five years he and family constituted the sole inhabitants of Reading.

This Spear is said to have been a famous hunter, perhaps equal to Nimrod. On one occasion he saw a deer, but the deer managed to keep on the opposite side of the haystack, and the old man couldn't get a shot at him. But tradition says that the old man bent the rifle over his knee, shot *around the stack* and killed the deer at the first fire.

Mr. Spear frequently served his townsmen in public capacities.

Barakiah Cady arrived about 1777, and settled near Mr. Spear, on the farm now occupied by Addison Thomas. In 1780 Benjamin Buck came and settled on the farm now owned by George W. Davis, and at that time the only families in town were Nehebiah Cady, Barakiah Cady, Moses Chaplin, John Weld and a few others. Moses Chaplin settled where Mr. Eastman now lives, and Mr. Weld on the Austin farm. These men selected smooth, productive, easily cultivated land, and these farms are to-day pleasant residences in the summer, but a little tough in winter when the merenry sinks and the wind howls.

The records of the proceedings of the land proprietors of Reading have recently been found by the assistant town clerk and afford some clue to the progress of its settlement. To encourage settlements, these proprietors, at a meeting legally warned by advertising said meeting in the Connecticut newspaper and holden at the house of Alexander Parmlee, in Windsor, June 16, 1779, it was voted, That John Weld, James Sawyer, Seth Sabin, Joseph Sawyer, Jedediah Leavens, John Sawyer, Hezekiah Leavens, and Samuel Gary have liberty to pitch and settle 850 acres of land in a convenient body so as to make a convenient neighborhood. And in this year Mr. Weld and most of the others named came to Reading and commenced their settlement in the Henry Austin neighborhood.

In April of this year John Weld had bought 850 acres of land in Reading for £600 continental currency, a small price per acre, taking into account the depreciated state of currency.

This John Weld became a prominent man in the history of the town, a deacon in the church, an active business man, and an extensive land owner. He was frequently called upon to serve his fellow townsmen in official capacities both in town and in the Legislature—but illustrates the mutability of human affairs, in that he

died in poverty. The Sawyers and Leavens also became honored and respected families.

David Hapgood was another notable man. He came to Reading and commenced clearing up the Ed. Hammond farm in 1779, built a log house and lived in solitude and alone during much of the time, his nearest neighbors being miles distant. The news of the burning of Royalton by the Indians did not dishearten him, but returning one day from a temporary absence he found the Indians had given him a call and stolen the meat he had left over the fire and such other articles as they most coveted. He concluded the time of his departure was at hand and hastily returned to Massachusetts. The next spring however, he returned to his log hut and clearing, accompanied by his brother Thomas and other young men and resumed his labors. He prospered in his wilderness home and erected in 1782, the first framed house in Reading, being the present residence of Ed. S. Hammond.

The town was organized March 30, 1780, at a meeting held at the dwelling house of Capt. John Weld, and the usual town officers elected. Jedediah Leavens was the first town clerk and treasurer. John Weld, Andrew Spear and Robert Grandey, the first selectmen and Barakiah Cady the first constable.

The settlement of Reading seems to have progressed favorably from 1780. In 1791 the population numbered 747; in 1800, 1,123; in 1810, 1565, and reached the highest number, 1,603 in 1820. Since 1820 the number has gradually diminished to 1,011 in 1870. Time forbids a detailed account of the progress of settlement here. A controversy existed as to the true east line of the town. Under the claim of Windsor, the place whereon we are now assembled and the houses on the east side of the main street in Felchville, were in Windsor. The controversy was finally settled by dividing diagonally the disputed territory.

Many of the early settlers were men imbued with Puritanical habits and opinions, and early turned their attention to the subjects of education and religion. Accordingly, March 14, 1785, the town voted to raise £15 for building a meeting-house, a pound, clearing a grave yard and to pay selectmen's accounts for 1784; said tax to be paid in labor at 6s, 3d. per day, in wheat at 5s. per bushel, or potash salts at market price, and chose Benjamin Sawyer, Samuel Sherwin, Andrew Spear, Aaron Kimball, and David Hapgood, a committee to lay out the above tax. As a result, a log church and a log parsonage were built on the hill between David Burnham's and the place now owned by Mr. Lewis Barnes, on a road now discontinued. A congregational church was organized and June 26, 1787, Rev. Nahum Serjent was unanimously chosen pastor. The same day the town voted to settle Mr. Serjeant, and voted for "his support annually £50, for the first year 'and to rise £5 in a year until it comes to £60 to be paid annually in wheat at five shillings a bushel, rye at four shillings a bushel, corn at three shillings a bushel, in beef, pork, wood, flax,

"sugar, butter and cheese to be delivered to Mr. Nahum Sargent, "in proportion to the price of grain as above stated and to cut and "draw him 30 cords of firewood, eight feet long, annually, while he remains our minister." Mr. Sargent continued as pastor of this church until his death, October 7, 1792, and the church continued without any settled pastor for nearly twenty years. The second church was erected in 1801, having more claims to style and comfort than the rude structure of logs. It had only a rough board floor, no pews, but rough seats, a rude pulpit, and was innocent of inside finish. In this rude temple assembled these pioneers, and in the absence of a clergyman, religious services were conducted by such men as Deacon Nathaniel Pratt, Deacon William Cowdry, Deacon Bigelow, and Deacon Younglove Bixby. The tithing men kept the boys still, while prayer, the singing of a psalm deaconed from the deacon's seat in front of the pulpit, and the reading of one of Jonathan Edwards' sermons refreshed the religious wants of the pioneers. This edifice was destroyed by fire, supposed to have been the work of an incendiary, and that, too, without the temptation of a large amount of insurance. The brick meeting-house at the Centre was erected in 1816. Of its subsequent history I need not speak. Several clergymen, eminent for learning and piety were settled as pastors over this church. Rev. Moses Elliott, Rev. Mr. Washburn and Rev. Mr. Converse are familiar names. Subsequently a church of liberal christians was formed and for several years Rev. Samuel C. Loveland discharged the pastoral duties. Of this eminent divine many of you who have been privileged to listen to his sermons have a vivid recollection. His reputation for learning and piety was confined to no narrow limits. For many years he was one of the assistant judges of the County Court. While residing here he edited a religious periodical published at Woodstock, and he made long journeys, invariably on foot, to fulfill his appointments to preach. The master of many languages, profoundly versed in theology and history, a sound reasoner, a ripe scholar, his ordinary conversation possessed a finish rarely met. The freemen of Reading honored themselves and the town by sending him four times to the General Assembly and in 1831-2-3, he was a member of the Council. In religious belief he was a restorationist. One of the first pastors of the church at South Reading was Rev. Dr. Forrester, now of Aurora Illinois, and a very eminent man in his denomination. Educational as well as religious subjects interested the early settlers. Both charters made reservation of land for schools.

The early settlers were not learned men. The early records give abundant proofs of the illiteracy of many of the early town officers. As the boy said, they were 'smart enough to spell a word more than one way' on the records. Yet these men were not bigots in educational matters, and could look beyond the limits of their own township, look to the future prosperity of their children, and appreciate the vocation of the pedagogue. As early as April



5, 1778, the town voted that Nathaniel Pratt, Asa Wilkins, Samuel Sherwin, John Weld, Elisha Bigelow, Abijah Stone, Solomon Keyes, John Sherwin, Abel Amsden, John Morse, George Clark and David Hapgood divide the town into districts. The record continues, "chose Thomas Brown, Jr., Henry Carlton and Asa Carlton to set the salm. Voted swine go at large yokt & riuged & that the hogwards pound no swine except complained of."

These men, the progenitors of families now living here, thus laid the foundation for the common school system of this town. The early built log school-houses dotted the town, but were replaced by more substantial structures as the settlers increased and prospered. The schools for the last century have gathered in and instructed the children giving them only the rudiments of an English education. A few comparatively have attained Academic and College educations. I need not repeat their names. Some of our sons and daughters, realizing that Reading is a "good place to be born in if one only emigrates early enough," have turned their backs upon their native hills, and sought fortune and fame elsewhere; but these have never lost their veneration for their native town, nor permitted time and distance to dim their affection for the friends of their youthful days. The boys were rough and hale, delighting in athletic sports, wrestling and racing, and the early schoolmaster, though of limited education, would be deemed qualified if he had the muscle to handle the big boys; while the boys would hardly regard the reputation of the district well preserved in their keeping did they not only carry one for every ten in ciphering, but, also, carry the school-master out of the school-house the last day of the term. Reading, spelling and ciphering, indifferently mastered, the boy graduated from the back seat to the back woods. Full of life and energy he was the vexatious care of the tithing man at church, the sly author of all the eviltry in the neighborhood, and the recipient of the schoolmaster's rawhide and weeping willow at school. The rough, open school-houses of those days had one advantage—ventilation—and the rosy, healthy hue of the children's faces would contrast advantageously with the pale faces of modern school children. The schools of Reading have certainly improved in character since those early days, until they present their encouraging condition of to-day. The large majority of my fellow townsmen are indebted solely to the district schools of Reading for their educational advantages, and few if any towns can compare more favorably in general information, intelligence and good order among its citizens. Let me urge you then to emulate the example of the early settlers and former residents of Reading and nurture the public school as the bulwark of national, state and local prosperity. The hard-earned savings had better in part be put into the boy's head and not into his pocket. It is the cheaper and better method of maintaining good society, for while it costs \$1200 for every criminal convict, the average cost of educating our children is only about \$400 each.

At one time the school districts were not numbered as now, but each had its name. The names were such as the Franklin district, Columbia district, Literature district, and to Felchville was assigned the title, Willshire district.

Of some of these pioneers who subdued the forestes here and made the howling wilderness fertile fields, I can but briefly speak.

Dea. Nath'l Pratt was a prominent character. His venerable form commanded respect. He was austere in manner, scrupulously honest, and walked with God many years when in the rough life of a sparsely settled country there was as much reverence for the rude loyalty of Ethan Allen as for the gentle tenets of a christian faith. He made his pitch in the Brown school house district cleared up a half acre one summer and built a log house, and the next spring, 1783, came with his wife and five children, going from the Benj. Weston place to his half acre and log house by following marked trees. He in common with other settlers went to mill, carrying his grist on his back, to Windsor, or Claremont, or Woodstock, until mills were erected in Reading. He was naturally the subject of some criticism, but there was little truth or justice in the allegation that he whipped his cider barrels for working on Sunday, and turned his sap buckets upside down on Saturday nights that he might not realize a worldly profit out of the Lord's day.

Deacon Younglove Bixby also settled in the same district in 1794, and was a deacon of the Baptist church in Windsor.

These two men were at one time leaders, if not embodiments of the piety of the town. They were men of indomitable perseverance and possessed of great decision of character; superstitious perhaps, viewed from the reflection of modern knowledge, and yet strictly conscientious.

A long list of eminent sons of Reading might be enumerated. They have honored every profession and calling of life. Some have shown "what they knew about farming," others have prospered as mechanics, manufacturers, merchants, musicians, poets, inventors, editors, artists. Eleven have been called to the bar and two honored with a seat upon the bench, while others have attained distinction in the pulpit and in the professor's chair. Many of them have come up here to-day to honor the town with their presence, and others are with us in spirit and feeling. An interesting sketch of each one might be written, but I must not thus trespass upon your patience.

In early years the weary traveler could find rest and repose and food and fire, and possibly some N. E. Rum, at many a wayside inn. The Hapgood tavern, Burnham tavern, Weld's tavern, and a few of the long list. Many a rollicking story could be told of the jolly scenes witnessed within those rude taverns, when the pulse beat high to the music of the toddy stick and the song and joke went round the boisterous crew, or the rustic fiddle led the merry dancers till the morning's dawn, though outside howled the

wind and storm. Nor should we forget the merry dancers gathered in the old kitchens, with a huge fire in the fireplace to brighten the scene, and the neighboring boys and girls whirling through the giddy dances, nor the merry huskings, apple parings, quiltings, raisings and militia trainings of those early days.

Let us observe the changes that have occurred in the locality of the inhabitants of Reading.

The western and northern parts of the town were early settled. Gov. Benning Wentworth selected the five hundred acres reserved for himself in the charter issued for Reading, in the N. W. corner. The Chase district (so called) now entirely deserted of inhabitants, was once thickly settled by large, enterprising and thrifty farmers. The Brown school house district does not contain but a small number of families compared with the population of fifty years ago or less, and the same is true of the country on and beyond Mt. Moses and so southerly through the burrough. This territory's history is but a repetition of the history of many other hilly towns; the hill farms are being deserted and the valley farms are sought for, or the tidal wave of emigration hurries them on to the hardships and privations of frontier life in the great West.

Reading centre was for many years a thriving village, having the usual number of stores, shops, taverns, &c. These have gradually changed, the buildings have gone to decay, the church been pulled down, and the business establishments been transferred to other places. The mail was in an early day carried from Windsor to Rutland over the Wardner hill and through the centre, where was a post-office, the route apparently going over all the hills possible.

In 1826 there were but five houses within the limits of Felchville. These five were located as follows: One west of Mr. Watkins, (Elihu Bowen's) one near Azro White's owned by a blind man named Cook, the Fairbanks house, the Kile house and the Calvin Grandy place, the frame part of Baldwin & Kendall's store. The site of this village was considered worthless, or nearly so, being swampy and low. Wm. Wilkins once sold the whole of Watkins' farm and one-fourth of Felchville for \$800. Wm. Felch, whose name the village bears, built the brick tavern in 1827, and in connection with Orrin P. Clark, opened the first store in the building where widow Amsden now lives. The village gradually increased. The first meeting house was built in 1834, where the tin shop stands.

The factory was built in 1835, saw mills and other buildings soon followed and finally the village was incorporated and provided with corporation officers from president down. These corporate powers have not been exercised for many years.

A coach and four soon was put upon the route through Felchville, running from Woodstock to Charlestown, N. H., Judge Hutchinson and Mr. Ellis being proprietors. This was run about one and a half years and discontinued. Subsequently Wm. Felch,



Hiram Cutting and Daniel Stearns run a two horse stage from Woodstock to Charlestown, and in 1830 the post-offices at North Springfield, Felchville and South Woodstock were established and Samuel Hemenway appointed the first postmaster at Felchville. The mail for about two years was carried for the government's share of the income of these then newly established offices, and that income from the Felchville office amounted to the enormous sum of \$10 per year.

Time forbids my going into the details of the growth of this village. Every one here can attest to its beauty, nestled among these hills.

South Reading village grew to its present proportions many years ago. Lewis Robinson's map business and starch factory, Marvin Robinson's tannery and Mr. Buck's potash, with the mills and store have constituted the business of that village. It still is known by its early name, Malagash. Hammondsville and Bailey's Mills are also notable points in town, and why should they not prosper since they have Mt. Moses and the *profits*.

It is not known that any of the inhabitants of Reading were in the war of the revolution. The frontier situation of the town and the peculiar position of the leading men of Vermont, kept the inhabitants of the town out of active hostilities. Some soldiers of the revolution subsequently settled in Reading and became honored citizens, Capt. Hawkins, Lieut. White, Sergeant Rice, Jeremiah Johnson, Mr. Darling, Cornelius Sawyer, Benj. Sawyer, and Thos. Townshend are all the names I have been able to gather. Abel Gilson, Willard Holden, Rufus Forbush, William Robinson, David Wetherbee, John Wetherbee, Benj. R. Nutting, Elijah Chandler, Elisha Sawyer, John Sawyer, Abial Pearsons, Samuel Dudley, John Grandy, Benj. Grandy, Robert Dunlap, and John Y. Sawyer were some of the soldiers of the war of 1812 who went from Reading. And during the late contest for the suppression of the slave holders' rebellion, Reading has an honorable record. One hundred different men applied on the several quotas of whom 25 were bounty jumpers, and the 75, citizens of the town. Of these 75, 23 were killed in battle or died of disease contracted or wounds received while in the service. One of 12 of the inhabitants went into the army and of those who went one of every three gave up his life for his country. While we mingle here let us not forget these patriot dead. Virginia's soil possesses them; Andersonville is the resting place of some. Gettysburg, the Wilderness, the burning sands of Florida and Louisiana each has a quota and a few mingle their ashes with the soil of their native town. There is no traitor's or coward's grave among them; but true to the old flag they fought and died. Green as the turf above them be their memories preserved in our hearts. Let the kind hand of woman's affection, and of man's generous gratitude cause to bloom above their narrow homes the choicest flowers. Let the sculptured marble narrate their virtues and their memories be cherished when the marble tablets shall have crumbled to the dust.

Mr. Davis' address was followed by music from the choir, with orchestral accompaniment, and from the band. The president then introduced Rev. T. J. Sawyer, D. D., of Tuft's College, who delivered the commemorative address, which was a short, off-hand speech, full of humorous allusions. He referred to the pleasure it gave him to meet so many old friends whom he had not seen for a long time, and referred to the situation of Reading being such that not even a brook or spring ran into it, but "everything ran out." The town has no mineral resources and but little in the way of manufactures, but it was a comfortable place to live in. It was so far from market that all the good butter and yellow legged pullets had to be eaten at home. (Laughter.) There were no river bottoms, but the hillsides gave good crops. He referred to the stories told by the old settlers and repeated a good one himself. The old settlers, who were stern and rough enough, should be held in grateful remembrance, for they had planted our schools, and we are indebted to them for many things. They used to drink too much New England rum in Reading, but the temperance movement has nearly stopped that. It has been a moral town; there was but little temptation back there upon the hills, and the people lived an industrious, frugal life. In politics Vermont has always gone right and I believe it always will. I am an old line Republican and cannot follow Mr. Greeley. I stood by Mr. Greeley as long as he stood by me. He has been a member of my church, but am I to be a fool because he is? Oh, no, no. They set me down for a "commemorative address." I don't know what that is, and I doubt if you do. (Laughter.) I suppose it means a free and easy talk, such as I have given you. With a reference to the attachment of all people to their native country, and expressing a wish that they all might meet again, the Doctor closed.

Dr. Sawyer is a man of fine presence, and a good speaker. It was amusing to observe the luxuriant crop of discussions that were born of his reference to politics.

Dr. Sawyer has not furnished for publication the full text of his address, very much to the regret of his numerous friends who listened to its delivery.

After music from the band and an invocation by Rev. Ira Carter, the table committee distributed among the audience the refreshments from the tables.

During the intermission the old style band appeared upon the platform—Otis Foster with the tenor drum, Henry Megrath with the fife, and Capt. Nathan Sherwin with the bass drum—and executed in a very creditable style some of the old-time martial music, to which the old militia companies kept step. Maj. Abial Persons, aged 86, a drum major in the war of 1812, showed the crowd "what he knew about drumming," and the aged hands made the drumsticks fly in a way that would put to shame many a drummer of to-day.

The audience were called together by the familiar strains of "Hail Columbia" from the band, and the afternoon exercises were commenced by singing from the choir, followed by a lively historical poem by Mrs. Frances Baker of Chester, a copy of which is subjoined :

### FRIENDS, ACQUAINTANCES, AND FELLOW TOWNSMEN OF READING :

Somewhat less than a century ago,  
These States, then Colonies, as you know,  
Were in a state of wild commotion  
And exercised by fierce emotion ;  
Because old England to her trust,  
Had been unfaithful and unjust.  
Illiberal in managing, tyrannical in governing ;  
Over the rights of these thirteen daughters,  
The mother country, beyond the waters,  
Had domineered with meddling hand :  
Till their wrath long up-pent,  
Now burst forth in ferment,  
Entirely beyond their control.

Still, more in sorrow than anger,  
They commenced the horrid clangor  
Of arms, for the terrible strife,  
Which must end with freedom or life,  
And this was but the sad prelude,  
Which ushered in the conflicts rude,  
Of Lexington, Concord, and Ticonderoga,  
Of Bunker Hill, Brandywine, and Saratoga ;  
While Yorktown saw the final fray,  
And Independence won the day ;  
Which the daughters convened, had voted to fix  
On the fourth of July, 1776.  
Then was settled the difficult suit,  
Of which this Union's the ripened fruit,  
But vast as it is and mighty and bold.  
In years and experience 'tis far from old ;  
For its d dily suns have not risen and set ;  
Lacking four years, on a century yet ;  
And to-day we witness the strange paradox,  
Of one of the children, "chip of the old block,"  
Who years in age can now reckon more,  
Than the dame who bore her can, by four !  
An example which, I am sorry to say,  
Is far too common in "Young America,"  
Where one can see that her fast young women and men  
Are themselves the old folks—not the parents ! but then  
So great their propensity is to roam,  
That seldom are they "The old folks at home" ?

But to come to the point—and your pardon I crave,  
For this queer introduction to what you would have—  
A poem, entirely on Reading affairs ;  
And how with the rest of the world it compares.

It happened that all of Revolutionary time,  
Were not of warlike turn—as I shall show in rhyme,  
But some, of pedigree no more exotic,  
And having hearts no whit less patriotic,  
Preferred to gun and blade, a farmer's avocation ;  
And by the plough to aid the welfare of the nation ;  
Not all did reverence to the stem Bellona ;  
Loyal they were to Ceres and Pomona ;  
Those sought for honor on the battle field ;  
These from the fields, that corn and turnips yield,  
Thus the industrious yeomanry clothed and fed  
The soldiers who fought and the captains who led.

Of these brave men's good helpmates, so peacefully inclined,  
Some, from the Bay and Granite States, of purpose like, combined,

With some from Steady Habits' Land; resolved to show their mettle;  
By forming a pioneer band and coming up to settle  
On some Green Mountain grants, afterwards labelled Reading;  
Bringing their stocks and plants, their farming tools and bedding.

This land's a combination of tiny vales and hills,  
With power in concentration, from streams, to turn their mills.  
Too abruptly the snug town turns away its head  
From the broad Connecticut, down-rolling in its bed;  
And towards the loftier summits stretches far away,  
As in vain aspiration for the god of day,  
A laudable ambition in intellectual toil;  
But a wretched condition for tillers of the soil:  
Turning streamlets into leaping floods, with desolation sweeping  
Over gardens, fields and highways, mills and bridges, and lone bye-ways,  
Like the desert steel, free from fetter or rein,  
Careering at will over mountain and plain;  
Every hindrance in its pathway spurning,  
Every check in its fury o'erturning;  
So stop not these streams, for bank, dam, or stone,  
But all in their way, to ruin is borne,  
And although the career of these freshets is brief,  
They're the bugbear of childhood, of manhood the grief,

Do you ask me for proof? let the land owners tell,  
Who owned farms on the banks, cultivated so well;  
Ask gulf-roads and ruined bridges, and the huge gravelly ridges;  
And the old ruined mill-sites, that nobody'll repair;  
But mostly ask the tax-payers, who're oft thrown in despair.

In natural scenery, the landscapes combine  
To form some romantic, but little sublime.  
Of Mounts, it has no Mansfields, with its chins and noses;  
But we all remember well, that it has Mount Moses;  
A peak not to be laughed at, as those of you know,  
Who travel that way, when to "Five Corners" you go!  
And old men here can testify, that after winds swept whistling by,  
When cold enough to terrify, how they like heroes worked to try  
By shoveling snow, to clear the roads;  
That thereby, Plymouth folks they might induce  
To come to Reading, with their loads  
Of shingles, bark, lime, and other produce.

Therein as elsewhere, one may see  
The mighty power of policy;  
Which could make men risk their ears and noses,  
To shovel snow-drifts upon Mount Moses:  
For the crafty purpose of coaxing a neighbor's trade,  
In the hope that an "almighty dollar" might be made,  
Nor has the town Hills of military fame,  
Like Bunker's and Breed's, and such euphonious name,  
But instead it has a Wardner Hill, which, straight to Windsor leading,  
Is the dread of all the scoundrels, who are close confinement needing,  
For there stands waiting the State Prison,  
Of which a wholesome fear has risen,  
Which makes sneaks, knaves, and criminals, shy in their speeding.

And Keyes Hill, which was once so steep,  
That the timid trembled, lest with a crash,  
Horse and rider, with ruinous sweep,  
Should be hurled swift down to their final sleep,  
When they travelled that road to Malegash,  
That same Malegash, which many years later,  
(Now South Reading called,) in wealth had grown greater;  
Through prosperity and industry it quite changed the tone  
Of its affairs, and then it built a meeting-house of stone;  
Wherein also was kept a large district school,  
In which pupils were taught by precept and rule,  
Thus in time it grew to equal the Middle of the Town;  
And by a "leetle-bit" of strife, tried to put it down.

And last though not least, there's Caper Hill,  
On which once lived Pearsons, surnamed Bill;  
Where I just *guess*, though never *knew*,  
And therefore can't avow as true,  
That there the "young-uns" got so antic,



As most to drive their parents frantic;  
 By "hazing about" in their bettermost rigs,  
 In cutters and chaises, and wagons and gigs,  
 And with "heel and toe" and now "down the middle,"  
 Tripping to the sound of Hubbard's fiddle!

As Irving had his Sleepy Hollow,  
 Where Dutchmen slept full twenty years,  
 So Reading has its Sherwin Hollow,  
 Where Mynherr sure may find compeers!

Neither has the town an Andersonville,  
 But instead it has a Hammondville,  
 Through which daily passes the "slow stage coach;"  
 Of which no meddler e'er had the audacity,  
 For transporting passengers and the mail;  
 And so no Telegraph or Road of Rail  
 On its rights have yet attempted to encroach.

Instead of Manchester or Lowell,  
 It has a Felchville, you all know well;  
 Where if not silk and bobinet,  
 They yet can weave good satinet.

But in its prosperous days, the "Middle of the Town,"  
 Of all the other villages, rather wore the crown,  
 For had it not at least two stores,  
 Where singly, doubly, or by scores,  
 Goods of every hue and texture, pure and clear, or by admixture;  
 Of curious shapes and every dimension,  
 That ever was planned by man's invention,  
 Were sold for cash—but more for credit,  
 And buyers found an awful debit  
 Against them, when with prudent intent,  
 They made their annual settlement.

Then they had shops for mechanical trades,  
 Where things were fashioned of various grades;  
 Shoes for horses and people to wear, and excellent leather was tanned right there.  
 And saddles, and bridles, and harnesses and carriages,  
 In which the owners rode to meetings and to marriages,  
 Ministers they had to save the sinful soul,  
 And Doctors likewise, to keep the body whole.  
 In earlier days, the Doctor's name was Bowen,  
 Famed in his craft, as Doctors then were going.  
 But much too far away was he, over hills up and down;  
 So afterwards they settled at the Middle of the Town.  
 But lack-a-day and woe, as in nature things go,  
 Nothing is too firm to be shaken;  
 The old runs its race, the new takes its place:  
 And now the old village's forsaken.

In the things of religion, that the town had need,  
 As in temporal things, it was early agreed;  
 So soon after 'twas settled, the inhabitants met,  
 To decide upon a spot, a meeting-house to set.  
 The town was surveyed and the centre was found  
 To be in a lot on Captain Burnham's ground.  
 He, at whose door, the swinging sign proclaimed,  
 Entertainment for man and beast,  
 Where both might rest, and sleep and feast;  
 And where, if the house was not sadly defamed,  
 A beverage was served more strong  
 Than tea of Bohea or Souchong!  
 Strange neighborhood for church, but then  
 The priests were not all temperance men!  
 But by a grievous fatality, or by some wicked rascality,  
 Before the meeting-house was near completed,  
 It was burnt; and thus were their plans defeated.

This required that another, they should immediately raise,  
 If on Sundays, they'd rather spend their hours in prayer and Praise  
 Than in roaming from virtue's paths widely,  
 And wasting the day, sinning and idly.

So a few rods off, in an eastern direction,  
In 1816, after mature reflection,  
The foundations of a new house were laid ;  
The walls securely of bricks to be made .

The final completion was made the occasion,  
For sending abroad a general invitation,  
To come and share in the glad celebration  
Of the Reading meeting-house's dedication.  
As there was no bell, so there was no bell ringing,  
But Lewis Hawkins, Esq., directed the singing,  
While for the preaching, many a clergyman came,  
Of name now forgotten, but of notable fame ;  
So the whole thing reached its final consummation.

And there with Heaven-ward pointing spire,  
Like the high mountain beacon fire.  
The house for more than one half a century stood ;  
Threatening the evil, but encouraging the good.  
And now, as will be of all things under the sun,  
Its early work is finished, its race is run.  
Let us hope, when again it rises to view,  
With its old walls rebuilt on foundations new,  
Again of the town it may prove the pride and glory,  
And leave for its record, a respectable story.

Their mini-sters were most approved orthodox,  
And they zealously preached condemnation,  
As throughout the land did the majority ;  
Till at length came one from the minority,  
And as earnestly he preached salvation,  
So was he denounced as vile heterodox.  
As he was Loveland, so he loved the truth,  
And willingly taught both manhood and youth ;  
And such numbers believed in his Gospel of "Good News"  
That the havoc was fatal to Calvinistic views.

In the olden days, in Reading there was not much work for lawyers,  
Though two of that profession sprang from the race of Sawyers,  
And also one from the notable family of Watkins,  
And others from the families of Adams and Hawkins .

In the way of amusements, the variety was but scant ;  
They'd no opera, or theatre, or concert room I grant ;  
But instead, they frequently had a ball  
In Morse's, Shedd's or Hammond's or Sawyer's Hall.  
For these they met at early night ;  
Lads and lasses in their gayest dressed,  
With their waists, I fear, too tightly pressed :  
And danced far on towards morning light .

Sometimes to sleighrides, merrily they went, the bells a jingling,  
Facing the frost right cheerfully, though ears and toes were tingling.

Sometimes, too, the girls went to help husk ;  
While to quiltings, the boys went at dusk :  
Then they hunted the slipper, and button played,  
And forfeits, and matches, and roll the plate,  
Thus occupying themselves, the whole time they stayed,  
With sensible games ! And when it grew late,  
Then both beaus and belles, as home they slowly went,  
Rejoiced in the evening, so happily spent.

Nor must I forget the important June training,  
Which attention must claim in sunshine or raining ;  
The captain with his trusty sword, the soldier with his gun,  
All for to fight the enemy, who ne'er should make them run :  
To help them keep the step, the shrill fife and noisy drum,  
And sometimes, it was whispered, a dram or two of rum.

Nor the annual Thanksgiving, so really essential,  
Even now, in New England, than Christmas more potential,  
With its plum pudding inevitable, and pumpkin pie alike creditable,  
To the fine yellow pumpkin, which much better suits  
This hard Green Mountain soil, than do tropical fruits—  
Or the matronly housewife so tidy and well-looking.  
Who likes to display her nice skill, in such festive cooking.

Never must I miss the telling,  
 (For my mind does not misgive me,  
 That you never would forgive me,)  
 Of the famous schools for spelling,  
 With emulation commendable, and a rivalry defensible,  
 There the young combatants took their stand,  
 For a real contest, hand to hand,  
 In the service of correct orthography:  
 Alike regardless, just then, of geography,  
 Or any other ology or ography  
 Thus many gathered from all the districts,  
 To try by fair knocks, and not by mean tricks,  
 Determined for the credit of their parts of the town,  
 Not without a struggle, to allow themselves put down.

And this leads to the observing, that few towns are more deserving,  
 Than is Reading to hearty commendation,  
 For efforts in the cause of education.  
 Furnishing many notable teachers and not a few respectable preachers;  
 So helping on the cause of social elevation,  
 And increasing for our nation, the public estimation,  
 Thus the firm foundation laying,  
 For the means of safe conveying,  
 To the future certain prosperity.  
 As well as to the near posterity.  
 Thus too integrity ensuring  
 And thus a welfare long enduring.

Seven towns disputed for the honor  
 Of giving birth to the famous Homer;  
 So very like, with just as good reason—  
 Because it happened once on a season,  
 He came there to bid good-bye to his mother—  
 (She lived there with his sisters and his brother,)  
 Reading may compete with many another place  
 For having been the birth-town of Chief Justice Chase!

Neither would I neglect, if in this too I may be heard,  
 To pay to the old brick school house, my parting tribute, word:  
 First here in this connection, to describe the complexion  
 Of the thoughts of its past, which in my memory are stirred  
 It was on a small steep hill, pretty near to Bailey's mill;  
 And to that school a mere baby, summer and winter I went,  
 Half a dozen years it may be, until to the new school house sent;  
 Just established at the middle of the town,  
 After mature deliberation, for the better accommodation of the families,  
 who had there settled down.

On a little sled, to this school I used to ride;  
 Drawn by my kind father's hand;  
 Because with my wishes, he willingly complied,  
 And because he loved so well, I should learn to read and spell.  
 But I must not miss a word—by his command.

With a big heap of scholars, when I was older,  
 I rode on a horse-sled, more grand;  
 We little ones sat in the straw, while the bolder  
 Could hold fast by the stakes—and stand.  
 As we rode up the hill, we slid off from the sled,  
 And not against the will, in the snow made our bed.  
 This accident made a great muss and an inexplicable fuss:  
 Which we liked none the less, as you'll readily guess!  
 So I fear there was more play than learning in this school;  
 Though most fearfully we dreaded the teacher's great rule!  
 I think some of you here, must in this have had a share;  
 For as I review these scenes with memory's eye,  
 And to recall them by imagination try.  
 It seems to me, half the children in the town were there.  
 When we stood in a class and spelt and read,  
 Always the lucky one went to the head;  
 But alas! how many slipped down to the foot,  
 While trying to learn how the ideas shoot.

Why at this centennial finally do we meet?  
 Why with so hearty welcome, do we each other greet?  
 Though different the objects, that took us away,  
 'Tis the same has induced us to meet here today.

The remembrance of the homestead in which we had our birth,  
 And of the childhood's gathering, round the paternal hearth ;  
 Of kinsmen and acquaintances, of townsmen, one and all ;  
 These clamorous thronged around our hearts and bade us list the call,  
 To come and try to bring to life, the dear old scenes of yore,  
 And for a few brief hours renew those holiest times once more.

But those of by gone days, were the joys  
 When we all were merry girls and boys,  
 Now however earnestly we reckon,  
 Or however anxiously we beckon ;  
 We can't recall them back, whatever way we try ;  
 They turn not on their track, they cannot heed our cry.  
 No longer are we children, we're women now and men,  
 And everything is changing, nothing is now as then.

With our youthful days departed,  
 Went the dear old forms and faces  
 Of our own true kindly hearted ;  
 And now new ones fill their places.  
 Broader has grown the graveyard, thicker are planted the stones ;  
 Many new heaps of greensward cover the dearly-loved ones ;  
 And as we read the names, which once gave us gladness,  
 Then unbidden come the tears, the heart aches with sadness.

And this lesson true, however sad, we all must sometime learn,  
 That though the past, as life is dear, it never can return ;  
 So the best that we can now do is, be thankful for our past,  
 And so improve our present time, that we all may meet at last.

FRANCES MARIA SHEDD BAKER.

Music by Choir of Ye Olden Time.

Recitation of a Poem by Stella M. Bryant, (less than 7 years of age.)

Thomas Curley, Esq., a student in Tuft's College, made a short but telling speech referring particularly to educational matters. No speech was better received, and the editor regrets that he is unable to obtain a copy of it.

Ill health prevented the attendance of Miss Minnie S. Davis and her father, Rev. S. A. Davis, read the following poem, written by her, and dedicated to her father's native town :

## ONE HUNDRED YEARS.

BY MINNIE S. DAVIS, HARTFORD, CT.

The story of a hundred years,  
 We sing with joy to-day,  
 And count our father's hopes and fears  
 Through all the devious way.  
 Since first with loyal heart and hand  
 They broke the virgin soil,  
 And planted here their christian home,  
 By hard and patient toil.

Our glorious Republic then  
 Was struggling into birth.  
 And soon the war-cloud filled the sky  
 And darkened all the earth.  
 And thus our infant sires were taught  
 'Twas noble to be free.  
 For mothers bending o'er them sang  
 The song of Liberty.

Then followed in a sunny train  
 The blessed years of peace,  
 And fruitful farms bloomed on these hills  
 Made rich by earth's increase.



Religion here her altars reared,  
And science founded schools,  
And all the young were taught  
To walk by Wisdom's rules.

Thus loyal men and women true  
Were reared to bless the land,  
Who stood for Liberty and Right,  
(A brave and fearless band.)  
Through that darkest, saddest night  
Of civil strife and hate,  
When traitors vainly sought to wreck  
Our noble ship of state.

Thus hath the Father led us through  
In safety all the way,  
Our Shield and Comforter by night,  
Our Glory in the day!  
Now praises to His holy name  
That we are gathered here  
To celebrate with speech and song  
Our centenary year!

We praise him for this joyous day  
So full of happy meetings!  
For all its hopes and promises  
And sweet fraternal greetings!  
We praise him for the good and ill  
That all our past has told,  
And look with confidence for what  
The future may unfold.

*Hartford, Aug. 28th, 1872*

The Hon. John M. Stearns of Brooklyn, N. Y., a distinguished lawyer, and a native of Reading, delivered an address, an abstract of which appeared in the *Brooklyn Daily Times* of Sept. 3, 1872.

SUBJECT—"On the changes of a hundred years."

The changes of an hundred years teach lessons in morals or in the economies of life; according to the standpoint of our observations, or the extended or limited scope of our vision. The great world in its progress for a century last past, has realized the grandest developments. Even panegyrics on "*The lost arts*," have few facts to support them in comparison with our acting, living world. A century ago

#### STEAMBOATS, RAILWAYS AND TELEGRAPHS

were unknown. The appliances of machinery to the manufactory of woollens and cottons and silks and other materials of commerce and trade are scarcely a century old; while machine farming is a special development of our own country within the last forty years. But these changes in our industries and their wonderfully increased facilities are, if possible, less remarkable than the spirit and progress of our civilization. To bring the illustration home, the fact that barbarous laws were tolerated in this State sanctioning imprisonment for debt within the last fifty years may be stated. You remember, some of you, the rude, half-finished dwelling of Timothy Cady, standing a few rods from where we are now assembled. He had hewed out a rude home under the shadows of these surrounding hills and had reared a family. I remember three of his sons as grown up young men, but through bad health or bad management,



Cady was poor, and finally consumption fastened on his constitution and he went about this neighborhood as a

#### WALKING SHADOW OF DEATH,

till one day the Sheriff came with a small execution against him, and in default of goods seized his body and took him to jail. I remember well the one horse wagon in which Cady sat by the side of the Sheriff as they passed my father's door on their way to the jail at Woodstock. A long, sad journey of thirteen miles over the rude highways of that early day, would be a hard trial to a sick man, even had not that journey been one from the dignity of manhood to the home of criminals. His bowed head and pale and deathlike features made up a vision that will ever remain among the saddest memories of my life. He lived his week in jail, and was permitted to swear to what everybody knew before—his hopeless poverty—and thus robbed of his dignity of manhood, he was turned out to find his way back to his rude,

#### POVERTY-STRICKEN HOME,

from which he was carried a few months after to his grave. Now fellow citizens and friends, if you believe that such a transaction as the punishment of this poor sick man for his poverty, could have been so carried out at this day and hour, even among this law abiding people, then you may well deny the boasted progress of this age of wonders and subside in shame for the inhumanity of man. That the world does move in the right direction is shown by the way-marks of progressive years and ages. Two centuries since, the memorials of the bloody age of English

#### BIGOTRY AND PERSECUTION,

now found in the Tower of London, were the household deities of the national life. But now, sad and regretful, do we survey the "Traitor's Gate," leading up from the Thames, through which passed so many of the great men and patriots of our fatherland to the dungeon, the block and the gibbet; the victims of a conceived political necessity, or of political hate, which their freedom of thought and opinion inspired in their barbarous days. How has the severity of those comparatively modern times been softened down and replaced by a kindly charity during the last hundred years? How does the bigotry of the Elizabethian age contrast with the generous charities that have found their "headquarters" and public forum at Exeter Hall in London, during the last seventy years? Thence from the gatherings of the good and great in our fatherland have gone out to the nations, the sympathies of Christian civilization, the

#### SPIRIT OF HUMAN FREEDOM,

and a benign influence in behalf of the ignorant and oppressed in every land. Through such progress in opinion, English law, in its interest for the weakest subject, has found anew the old precedents

in favor of the defenceless, that, if existing, had been hid away in forgotten records for ages, or their authorities were developed and *born* through the humanitarian sympathies of regenerated judges.

But these grand illustrations from national development and the progress of civilization—among which the abolition of slavery in this country is the most marked;—though casting a joyous light over every village, town and hamlet in Christendom, must not lead us away from the subject and occasion that has brought us here to-day. To mark the changes wrought by the last hundred years on this local town,—our birthplace,—we go back to a day when, as the Indian said, nothing but gloomy forests covered this land, and we ramble with a hunter's instincts through the hemlock woods, over hills and across valleys, and by the alder brooks and forest shaded streams, and find

#### NO SIGN OF HUMAN HABITATION,

no fields of grass or grain, no camp-fires or hunter's lodge. The forest flowers bloom, and birds sing mournfully to the echoing hills. The "Black Forests" of the German Border are not more dark and gloomy, than were the primitive forests that covered these our native hills. To such a home came Andrew Spear in 1772, and now, at the end of a hundred years, we assemble to celebrate his pluck, his perseverance, and his endurance. I must note the great fact of his coming, but I am restricted in time, and must leave others to rehearse the incidents of his hardships and experiences. We only know Reading as a thriving farming town where our

#### SCHOOL-BOY DAYS WERE PASSED;

when our early dreams painted crimson visions in the clouds; when love was young and joyous; but in maturer years, perhaps, went back upon itself in the cool, calculating interests of a selfish world. But what changes are wrought even in fifty years! Where are the companions of our early days? Where the old men we saw when we were children? those grandfathers of four-score years whose bowed frames and whitened locks and tottering steps made the impressions of our earliest memories? Taking and apportioning the residents of the town, at least three generations have departed to the spirit land. We have their graves and headstones, and rude memorials of their lives on earth. They were and then were not—God took them all away. But nay; they do not sleep beneath the green-elad graves. *Machpelah's* cave was not the patriarchs' home. Some of our old friends are yet alive, are here, venerable in their lengthened years, and mindful of one great truth, that the earth is not man's long, long home. But let us look. A hundred years, if one could live so long, would be a

#### HISTORY TO FILL THE SCROLL

of fading memories. In such a life might well be gathered up the moral views and interests that would fill a treasure house to the

soul in its eternal years. Its childhood would not differ from the rest, nor manhood be less charged with toil and duty. But in growing age, the sadness as of autumnal days, would come to his heart and habitation. Like the old father of the forest, he sees his children one by one fade and wither, and fall, and he finds himself alone! Said the venerable Professor Whiting, a nephew I believe of the late Aaron Leeland, of Chester, in this county: "There is sadness in one's increasing years, when one by one his old associates and friends drop away and in the instincts of his friendship, he looks for them but finds them no more." Within the last two months we laid this good old man in his grave. His soul has joined the kindred spirits whose mutual friendships with him during a long life were so pure and beautiful. But to return; the

## LIFE OF A CENTURY

grows darker still when all its friends are gone, and when the faculties and forces that gave vigor to his manly days one by one decay and leave his life but the broken arches of a bridge of sighs. It were sad to so look to the end of a broken life, were not the memories of earlier days retained so fresh and green—of faith and hope and joy that cheer the pathway to the grave and lift the clouds from off celestial hills. Then as we leave this history of a hundred years, let us seek faith in Christ, whose hand shall gently lead us in old age, to the Christian's rest; nay to the land celestial, where flowers perennial bloom, and sighs and sorrow's tears are known no more.

Osceola A. Whitmore, a resident of Malden, Mass., a native of Reading, who has obtained a wide and deserved celebrity as a musician, executed a solo upon the Clarinet, that was cheered to the echo.

Wm. Watkins, Esq., of Towanda, Pa., a native of Reading, delivered an address but no copy has been furnished for publication. He expressed his pleasure in being present and went on to speak of Vermont institutions and particularly of its judiciary. He thought that the man really ripened up into a full blooded thorough Yankee in Vermont better than anywhere else.

Sewall Fullam Esq., of Ludlow, followed with the annexed speech:

## SPEECH OF SEWALL FULLAM, OF LUDLOW.

*Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen:*

It is to be regretted that want of time prevents the full exhibition and consideration of the many incidents of the last century connected with this town.

I am not a native of this town, but of Cavendish, where I was born April 7, 1799.

March 25, 1807, my father moved into this town and I resided here until April 16, 1828; my mother, a younger brother and



myself rode here in a sleigh, drawn by a pair of stout bay mares of Seth Thomson, uncle by affinity of Thos. J. Sawyer, D. D., now present; he was then called "Jeff" for short; and it seems extremely stiff and formal to call him "Doctor" now; my father moved on to the farm where he died, April 27, 1842, aged sixty-nine, and where my mother died Sept. 24, 1865, aged eighty-eight, and to that period I kept myself posted in the affairs of the town.

When my father moved here there was a dilapidated tannery on the North line of Lieut. Kimball's farm, now Allen Spaulding's formerly occupied by Eben G. Cheever, and his old bark stone is now on the east end of a sluice across the highway a little south of Alonzo P. Watkins' house.

At that time Reuben Parker, called the prophet, (for he always prophesied a famine *before that great and terrible day of the Lord* when he had grain to sell; and when he had it to buy he prophesied a short season of plenty before that season, which he held to be a hand,) he had a brick yard, and a hand machine for cutting nail from iron hoops, old shovel and hoe blades, etc., he made car wheels and kept a small store.

A Mr. Webster lived near Mr. Parker's with a large family of splendid singers; they used to make weaver's reeds by hand; they were of dark complexion; their ancestors came from the East Indies, and by way of taunt the boys used to call them "third Indian, third Negro, third White," and Mr. James Hall, an Englishman, said "they zet and zing and zing, until the cows standing near the door would zing considerable."

Cornelius Sawyer next neighbor, a Revolutionary soldier, was a farmer and a wheelwright.

Benj. Sawyer was next neighbor, and a farmer.

Preston & Sawyer's cloth dressing mill was on the brook near the school house which was erected in 1815.

Dea. John Weld the emphatical father of the town, lived where Henry S. Austin now lives; he had a tavern, store and potash; he died March 20, 1816, aged eighty-eight, and as he gave the ground for the cemetery where he was buried, the citizens erected at his grave, a respectable stone to his memory.

Near Dea. Weld's, Benoni Buck Esq., erected a blacksmith's shop in which Calvin Leavens first worked, he also kept a tavern near by.

William Howard had a tannery where Hiram Rice now lives. The above named road was called Tattle Street, (now Sawyer's road.)

Leaving this road near the "Guide Board" erected by Isaac Baldwin, a road turned to the right and more easterly, and by tannery once owned by one Nehemiah Herrick, who fell dead on his plow a few years before.

At the next house, (Amasa Watkins,) lived Dr. Elkanah Day the first resident physician in this town, prior to 1790; he came from

Windham county, where he was sheriff in 1786 and 1787; and was afterwards killed by a fall from his horse.

At Alder Meadow Brook, a saw mill was erected about 1790, by a company of six men, where Amasa Watkins Jr.'s mill lately stood; the first saw was made of a bar of Swedes iron by a blacksmith named Johnson, who lived near by.

On the top of the first hill north of the brook lived Noah Bigelow, who built the first cider mill in that part of the town, and Dr. Silas Bowen, the third doctor in town lived with him when first married.

On the farm owned by Parker Kinsman, John Willey kept a store, near the site of Harmony school house, and he had a potash on Farmers' Brook.

Elisha Smith had a blacksmith's shop in front of Arnold Bixby's house where, among other things he made jews-harps.

Just above the bridge on Darby brook, Enon Clark had clothiers' works; he was succeeded by Cornelius Barnes, Nathan Boynton, now living in Andover, aged eighty-six,) and by George Clark, and Peter Darby had a saw mill just above.

The men between the Alder Meadow and Darby Brooks were described by a primitive poet as

Gospel Smith and Frothy John  
Cuddling Squire and lying ——  
Honest Noah and Silas too,  
Swearing Clark and noisy Jo.

This road was called by the euphonious name of Pucker Street; the road from D. P. Jones to South Reading, Grasshopper Lane; South Reading, the city of Malagash; and the road by A. W. Goddard's, Skunksboro.

The same poet renders them thus:

The people all were called to meet  
To change the name of Pucker Street,  
And thought 'twould make a better sound  
To change the name to Pucker town.

From West to East we make a dash  
From Pucker Street to Malagash,  
And when we shall return again  
We crawl up through Grasshopper Lane.

From Madam Jugs, if we go east,  
And when old Dippers we have passed,  
Skunksboro's mostly in the rear,  
Aside from scent, there's naught to fear.

When the town was first surveyed, "the Citadel" as the parsonage was called, was established, and then a road southerly eight rods wide to Alder Meadow, with fifty acre house lots on each side equal to the number of shares in the charter (68 shares.) This was intended as the great mart of the town; the Log Meeting house was on this road and about thirty rods south of the Sargent house or parsonage.

Near Grasshopper Lane on the south line of Dea. Aaron Goddard's orchard, (now Merritt E. Goddard's,) was a log house and



blacksmith's shop occupied by Ephraim Bixby supposed to have been the first in town.

Eben Robinson Esq., had a cider mill at an early day; he was a soldier of the revolution, and died at a comparatively recent date aged ninety-two, on the farm where he first settled.

About the commencement of the present century, Capt. Jonathan Chandler erected a saw and grist mill at South Reading, and Jonathan True opened a store; Elijah Spear, (son of Andrew,) had a shop in which he made axes, for which he was famous.

At the wharf, (middle of the town,) Capt. David Burnham opened a tavern in 1786; afterward John Hewlett and Jacob Brigham each did the same, and Elisha Bigelow Jr., also had one on the north side of the farm of the late Arnold Goddard.

Allen & Farwell had a store and potash at the upper end of the wharf, and Dea. Brigham was a blacksmith at the lower end.

David Hapgood kept a tavern where E. S. Hammond now lives.

Eleazer Hathorn had a shop south of Nelson Whittemore's house, where he made steelyards which were said to weigh well and were so handsome they would talk some.

Nathan Sherwin kept a tavern at Sherwin Hollow, and Capt. Jesse Holden kept a store there.

Col. Moses Chaplain kept a tavern on the Forbush place, and was succeeded by Capt. Rufus Forbush about 1805. William L. Hawkins Esq., opened the first tavern at Hammondsville, Abel Amsden at the Amsden place, and Joseph Fairbank at Orpheus Coburn's house at Felchville. The reason of these numerous taverns was, that the road from Woodstock to Boston was over the Forbush hill, through the middle of the town and by the way of Pucker Street to Cavendish.

The first saw mill in town was built by Col. Tyler of Claremont N. H., in 1780, who built a grist mill in 1783; these were a little below Carlos Wardner's on mill brook; Bailey's mills were first built by Abram Bailey and George Betterly, and Morse mills (now gone) were built by Alpheus Morse; a saw mill was built by Samuel Buck, near Simeon Buck's, at the raising of which Daniel Blanchard who lived on the America Amsden place and was the master workman, was killed.

John Sawyer, who married Dea. Weld's daughter, built Charles Buck's house; when preparing to build the chimney he wanted a stone some nine or ten feet long for a mantle tree and got his brother Benjamin to go with him and find one; they went to the hill north of his house and went to the border of the Buck farm and found a stone which was large; but by splitting would make three; they looked a little further and found one. A Mr. Leaven shortly after built a house a short distance east of Uncle John's (The men and women on Tattle Street had a wonderful faculty of being uncles and aunts to every body;) he went to uncle John to learn where he could find a mantle tree; they went to see the stone but could not find it; they called on uncle Ben, who said he would

bet his white mare that he could go blindfold to it; all three went but failed to find it; after a seven days' wonder, Benoni Buck Esq., found it and marked the trees around it; afterwards he was there and found the marked trees, but lo, the stone was gone! this proved that diabolus had a hand in it, and that the stone was the sentinel to guard a hidden treasure; after making assurance doubly sure, by other efforts and experiments they determined that the sentinel was occasionally relieved from duty like others of that profession.

Elisha Smith who was a son of Vulcan of Pucker Street, a son-in-law of the prophet on Tattle Street, and withal deeply versed in magic and sorcery, ciphered out the problem and determined that steel placed on the bark of the sentinel would dissolve the charm and render the treasure available. He went there, put his old Barlow knife on the stone, and left; he soon looked back, as did Lot's wife, and saw a headless man in hot pursuit, with the knife in his hand, telling him to take it back; how he could talk without a head is a mystery to this degenerate generation, but he took it back, and returned to the manufacture of jews harps.

The question being then thus doubly settled, diggings were from time to time prosecuted to find the treasure, and respectable men were engaged in it for a long time; and at last by one ebony son of Africa, who had a magic ball suspended from a silken cord, which through magical attraction indicated the direction of the treasure by swinging towards it.

No word was spoken while digging, lest it should frighten the treasure and it should depart; with all these cautions they failed, but made a large excavation, large enough now, to bury half this assembly in.

A like deposit was supposed to be made on the Jo. Morse farm, and still another in the hill east of Solomon Keyes', but old Nick holds the whole, even unto this day, showing that

"The best laid scheme o' mice an' men  
Gang aft agley."

The first practicing attorney here was Titus Brown, in 1816, afterwards member of Congress from N. H., after him, Crocker, William Watkins, Uriel C. Hatch, Josiah Q. Hawkins and G. A. Davis.

The second physician was Woodbury Marcy, a small man, who was called Dr. Bulky; he was tried for burning the meeting house July 4, 1810, and acquitted to the manifest chagrin of the inhabitants.

When Deacon Weld first came to Reading in 1778, he procuredorage for his small stock, from Beaver Meadow, on M. E. Godard's farm.

Mrs. Dr. Whiting and Mrs. Abiah Rice are supposed to be the two oldest persons who ever died in town.

Alvin Hatch aged eighty-six, and Mrs. Nancy Keyes Goddard, eighty-five, are the two oldest persons living in town who were born here.

Joseph Call was said to be the strongest man who ever lived in town which was no small compliment, considering the muscle of the men of his time.

Many regrets are indulged in at the steady diminution of the population of this town which is over 600 in the last half century, and all but the true reason therefor is assigned; when boys were regarded worth \$1000 and girls \$500 each, they were profitable stock to raise; but now they are regarded as an expense to about the same amount.

Where are your families now, like Reuben Rist's of eighteen children, Maj. Wm. Townshend's of seventeen, Benj. Hathorn's and Jas. Robinson's fourteen each, John Hewlett's and Mr. Pope's of thirteen each, with numerous others, of eight and above, and few below? With ample means to support families, with fathers and mothers enough, where are the babies?

Large families are out of fashion; and if this continues to rule we must look to a foreign market for a supply; the Emerald Isle will be our hatching ground, and "The Glorious Green Mountain Boys" will mostly be born in Ireland.

I do not propose to attend your second Centennial, and will therefore take my final leave of the subject, with thanks for your kind attention.

Honestus Stearns Esq., read the following original poem. He has since its delivery added verses so as to make the whole number one hundred, and published the same in a neat pamphlet.

#### A POEM.—BY H. STEARNS.

Hail! sacred day, soon numbered with the past,  
Day to recount a century's hopes and fears;  
Time, on his viewless wings, proclaims at last  
The consummation of a hundred years.

Since Andrew Spear first settled in this town,  
Upon the slope of yonder northern hill,  
In lofty grandeur forest branches frowned,  
Bidding defiance, e'en to an iron will.

In a low cabin, on the rising ground,  
Hard by a bubbling spring and lone wood road;  
Contentment there a residence has found,  
And wedded love, a humble, rude abode.

High expectations banished every fear;  
In summer shade beneath those grand old elms,  
Plain sustenance served up with smiling cheer,  
Gave health and strength to conquer nature's realms.

Loud rings the axe, redoubling strokes on strokes,  
The groaning thickets echo back the sound;  
On all sides round, the hemlocks and the oaks,  
Fall, tumbling headlong, crashing to the ground.

Ambitious still with firm and dauntless breast,  
They ply the torch to dry and withered leaves;  
The flames, uproarious, vouch to do the rest,  
And blackening embers site the place of trees.

And in due time the cereals appear,  
And waving grain inspires them with delight,  
Where wildwood gloom reigned o'er the former year,  
Lent deeper blackness to the moonless night.

Cold, cheerless winter now comes on apace,  
The wind-gods frown from off the murky sky;  
Dull, dark forebodings stare them in the face,  
Perhaps in this wild home they're left to die.

Cold! bitter cold, the frost-king bears the palm;  
The maddening winds howl dismal o'er the lea;  
The piled-up snow-drifts lend a doleful charm;  
The blazing hearth alone can comfort thee.

But like the snow-flakes, glistening in the sun,  
Hope scintillating bore them on their way;  
The snow, and blast, and sleet, their race had run,  
And opening spring brings on a better day.

Events of general interest, we recall,  
Within the period now in our review,  
Pertaining to our state, so much enthralled  
By double claimants, and a warlike crew.

Heroic Allen with the birchen seal,  
Dispersed the Yorkers, Minions of the crown;  
And held at bay a tyrant's iron heel,  
This sovereign state shall ne'er be trampled down.

The mind of Adams, towering to the sky,  
In tones of thunder that a tyrant smote,  
Proclaimed to live, to sink or swim, or even die;  
I, for the Declaration, give my vote.\*

That great point settled, patriotic zeal  
Thrilled every worthy heart in this broad land;  
For fires of freedom and their country's weal,  
They leave their homes to join the patriotic band.

One heart, one mind, one purpose to be free,  
Repel the invaders from their sacred soil;  
The foe o'ercome at length were pressed to flee,  
Or stay with us as partners of our toil.

The dawning prospects of the news of peace,  
Brought to our borders, troubled not with fears.  
John Weld, with others, sought now to increase  
The numbers of those hardy pioneers.

The sylvan shades, the hill-tops ever green,  
Sequestered nooks where laughing streamlets play,  
The balmy air and sparkling springs were seen,  
Whose cooling waters bade the traveler stay.

Some luxuries, too, not slighted in our time,  
The saccharine juices of the maple grove,  
The darting trout, the angler's hook and line  
Drew forth for rich repast and feast of love.

These social joys invitingly set forth,  
Enhanced the prospect of our little town,  
And numerous were the men of solid worth,  
Who, settling in our borders, won renown.

Intelligence, the blessing of our race,  
Demands a school-house of their scanty means:  
The record stands—we read it in its place,  
Assessed so many pecks of rye and quarts of beans.

\* John Adams' speech in the Continental Congress in favor of the Declaration of Independence



From some bare hill-top you can now behold  
The landscape, dotted with more numerous farms,  
The burning slashes, brighter scenes unfold,  
The curling smoke rolls up, enchanting charms.

Some wore the homespun garb of frugal care,  
While others lived beyond their proper means;  
Thus, in their wake, distrains, were nothing rare,  
And executions on their lands were seen.

"Let not ambition mock their useful toil,  
Their homely joys and destiny obscure,  
Nor grandeur hear with a disdainful smile,  
The short and simple annals of the poor."

For some ambitions of the lettered field,  
Essayed the depths of human ken to scan;  
Their genius rose above them as a shield,  
And going forth became distinguished men.

And now to change the order of our lays,  
Our numbers prone to dwell on the long past;  
Seek contemplations on more modern days,  
Though prospects may with clouds be overcast.

The old church on the hill with lofty spires,  
The place of song and penitential tears;  
Time honored gift from our departed sires,  
Falls crashing down beneath the weight of years.

The farms, once fertile on the western glebe,  
Where once resounds the joyful harvest home;  
Abandoned now for flocks and herds to feed,  
The dwellings razed, e'en to the old hearth stone

In dire disaster we have borne our share,  
Both fires and floods have devastation spread;  
It might been worse, therefore, in grateful prayer,  
We'll render thanks that we're not with the dead.

A damning blot upon our country's fame,  
Plunged us in war and fratricidal strife,  
Our noble boys sustained their goodly name,  
And many a son laid down his precious life.

Arms on armor, clashing in the fray,  
Led by their flag, rebellion to abhor;  
Onward to death! they rode to win the day,  
Midst braying discords of the din of war.

Our slave-stained shield, washed bright with human gore  
Survivors seek their own dear native bowers;  
The thunders hushed and quiet as of yore,  
Established peace and victory was ours.

Now peace and plenty everywhere abound,  
These blessings rare should never be despised;  
Bright visions of the future all abound,  
Beam brightly forth, we read them in your eyes.

Our institutions, permanent and great,  
Shall live through time's all devastating flight,  
On destiny our glorious ship of state,  
Sails proudly forth, a shining, blazing light.

And in the cycle of these rolling years,  
The ebb and flow of fortune is our lot;  
'Tis hoped a cloudless sky will banish fears,  
And "Auld acquaintance" never be forgot.

Thus we review a century of the past,  
We feel to say our pleasant task is done,  
The dawning future speeds you down at last,  
The dark, dim vista, of a hundred years to come.



Rev. Samuel A. Davis, of Hartford, Conn., a native of Reading, who has attained an enviable reputation as a Clergyman of the Universalist denomination of Christians, appeared upon the platform, by invitation, and made an acceptable speech. Owing to the lateness of the hour, and the large number of speakers, he omitted a large part of what he intended to say. The following is the substance of his remarks:

Mr. President and Friends—It is not an easy task to make an after dinner speech, especially after such a dinner as the ladies of Reading, have prepared for the *natives* of the town, assembled on this occasion. Some one has said that an after dinner speech should be full of *fun*, that it may help settle the dinner. Now it would be hardly proper for me, a minister, to say funny things to make the people laugh, on this occasion, as the ministers and people of a hundred years ago, thought it a sin to be merry. Besides which, I am one of the sad kind, the initials of my name being all S. A. D. But I am reminded that I must be brief. My invitation to speak here said distinctly, a brief speech; now this word brief is not very definite when applied to a speech, but as it came from a lawyer I suppose I may give it a lawyer's definition; so if any one of you know just how long a lawyer's "*brief*" is, you may know just how long I am permitted to speak. But I will not take advantage of the "lawyer's brief," as I feel that I should not occupy much of the time of this blessed day. It gives me great pleasure, friends, to meet you—to meet so many friends of my youth on this hundredth birth day of our native town. Though nearly forty years have passed since the last of my father's family left the town, I have ever retained pleasant memories of my earliest home. I am thankful to the citizens of Reading for the invitation to come to this reunion of old friends. It was a happy thought to celebrate this anniversary. It is an event to be remembered during the remainder of our lives. Many are here to-day, who, perhaps would never have seen their native town again but for this celebration. The occasion brings up many reminiscences of the past—memories of old scenes and old friends crowd upon us to-day. Some are sad, but many are joyous memories, and we are all glad to be here. Many who are not with us to-day in person are with us in spirit, their hearts and sympathies are with us on this joyous occasion, I know, for none ever forget the home of their childhood. A poet has well expressed the feelings of many hearts:

"The sad wanderer in a foreign land  
Gazes at night on other stars than those  
Which blest his boyhood's eyes; hears other sounds  
Than those of home—yet feels within his heart,  
That the same God is over all; and there,  
Upon the soil his kindred never pressed,  
He prays for blessings on his far off home."

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And friends, I believe many are with us here to-day whom we do not see—our fathers, mothers, sisters and brothers, and many loved ones who have fallen by our side along life's journey—yea, all the

early settlers of the town. Yes, I believe they are all here to-day sympathizing and rejoicing with us on this festive occasion.

The changes in the town are not striking, to those who have returned after a long absence, except in the people—many of our friends have passed away, and others from whom we parted in youth, are now silvered with the frosts of age. This reminds me that we are all growing old, and as seems appropriate to this thought, I close with the following poem:

#### GROWING OLD.

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We are growing old—how the thought will rise  
 When a glance is backward cast,  
 On some long remembered spot that lies  
 In the silence of the past.  
 It may be the shrine of our early vows,  
 Or the tomb of early tears;  
 But it seems like a far off isle to us,  
 In the stormy sea of years;

O wide and wild are the waves that part  
 Our steps from its greenness now,  
 And we miss the joy of many a heart,  
 And the light of many a brow;  
 For deep o'er many a stately bark,  
 Have the whelming billows rolled;  
 They steered with us from that early mark,  
 Oh! friends, we are growing old.

Old in the dimness and the dust  
 Of our daily toils and cares,  
 Old in the wrecks of love and trust  
 Which our burdened memory bears.  
 Each form may wear to the passing gaze,  
 The bloom of life's freshness yet,  
 And beams may brighten our latter days,  
 Which the morning never met.

But oh! the changes we have seen,  
 In the far and winding way;  
 The graves in our path which have grown green,  
 And the locks that have grown gray;  
 The winters still on our own may spare  
 The sable and the gold;  
 But we've seen the snows upon brighter hair,  
 And friends, we are growing old.

#### MR. IDE'S SPEECH.

Simeon Ide Esq. of Claremont, N. H., the veteran printer, publisher and editor, made the following speech:

MR. PRESIDENT:—I was taken somewhat by surprise by the announcement that my name was on your committee's programme, as one of the speakers. I am no public speaker, and never have been. But, with your permission, I will read to you a little of "what I know about" a few of the early settlers of Reading.

About twenty-five years after the first tree was felled in town, with the view to a permanent "clearing," I was brought here, as tradition has it, a helpless infant—and it is due to the memory of its first settlers, that in this connection I acknowledge my indebtedness to them—to their early erection of school-houses, and their

excellent teachers, (who didn't scruple to secure perfect order and subordination among their boys by *a liberal use of the rod*, when necessary) for nearly all the school instruction I ever enjoyed. We all know it was a matter of conscience with the hardy pioneers who laid low the forests, and subdued the rugged soil of this Green Mountain State, that *School-Houses* should every where spring up among them, simultaneously with their own private dwellings. To this wise provision of its first settlers, not only *Vermont*, but the nation at large, is indebted for the many distinguished patriots, jurists and statesmen, who have wandered from her fold in early life, and who first inhaled her vital air, and received the rudiments of their education, in her *common schools*.

Nor were they wholly unmindful of the importance of *religious* instruction. I have a pretty distinct recollection of being taken to Old Deacon Wells' barn, one Sunday in the summer of 1798, (I think it was) where were assembled a respectable congregation of men, women and children for public worship. This was in the Sawyer district, in the westerly part of the town. My impression is that the barn was a framed building, and the house was built of logs—and that the first settlement in town was made here by the predecessor of Dea. Wells. My recollection is not very distinct as to the teachings of the sermon—but of the no less important particulars I am confident—the demeanor of the assembly was devout, and the number small of those who went there to *show off fine clothes and rich jewelry*.

About seventy years ago my father, a poor mechanic, moved from another part of the town into what was then, and is perhaps now known as the "*Sawyer District*" He had a wife and four children to provide for. Through a series of misfortunes he had become somewhat disheartened. At this critical juncture he was taken by the hand and aided in the purchase of a small lot and tenement, by one of the Sawyers, whom we children were allowed familiarly to designate as *our* "Uncle John." By this generous and unsolicited assistance my father was encouraged to put forth redoubled efforts in providing for his family; and, my friends, permit me to add, sacred *was* and *is* the memory of Uncle John in the hearts and affections of father, mother and children of that family.

I need not tell *all* my brother townsmen here present, for some of you know it already, that such a neighborhood and community as the Sawyer School District is not to be found everywhere, now-a-days. In those times of primitive simplicity, we were virtually but **ONE FAMILY**, so far as the wants of the sick and needy, and the happiness of every member was dependent on the kind offices and sympathy of *each one* for the others.

**MY FELLOW-TOWNSMEN, FRIENDS AND BRETHEREN:** Although sixty-three years have passed since, in any strict sense, I ceased to sustain this relation to any of you, yet, for the purpose of our present re-union we meet to revive and enjoy for a time this en-



dearing relation. I have not words to express the pleasure it has given me to take by the hand, once more, some of the companions of my early childhood. True it is, this lapse of sixty-three years since I left the shelter of the paternal roof, and entered an apprentice to the "Art of all Arts," has greatly thinned the ranks of my boyish associates. But a few of them still linger, with me, this side that "bourne from whence no traveler returns," to enjoy the pleasure of re-visiting those rural localities which recall to mind so many associations, scenes and incidents of early life. But not longer, with those *personal* reminiscences, to detain my friends from a more sumptuous repast before them, I will propose—

*The Sawyer School District*—A model *Community* of the Early Times: May its sons and daughters, who are now settled, or who propose to settle, in new and formative regions, re-construct many others like it, and live long to enjoy the fruit of their labors.

Short speeches were made by the following gentlemen:

Mr. F. G. Weld, of Greenfield, Wis., a grandson of John Weld, one of the first settlers of the town then spoke, telling about his journey to Wisconsin, occupying a whole summer, and his return, upon hearing of this meeting, but two days. He spoke particularly of Vermont as a good place to raise men.

John L. Buck, Esq., an attorney at law, of Lockport, N. Y., spoke of his having been born upon a hill in the west part of Reading one cold night in the year 1802; expressed the anxiety he had felt to be present upon that occasion, and told some stories of the old settlers.

Hon. Julius Converse, of Woodstock, Vt., (since Governor of Vermont,) was introduced and was received with hearty applause. He said there were many "natives" who could speak to better acceptance than he, and with some pleasant and humorous remarks, excused himself.

Ex. Governor Ryland Fletcher, made one of those short, stirring, humorous speeches for which he is so justly famous, and which greatly pleased the audience.

A short speech by Hon. B. H. Steele of Hartland, Vt., was followed by the Rev. Horace Herrick of Wolcott, Vt., who though not a "native" chose an excellent and accomplished wife from among the "natives." He mentioned that the town had sent out eight clergymen, eleven lawyers, six or seven doctors, besides editors and prominent business men.

Calvin L. Robinson Esq. of Jacksonville, Fla., was announced to speak, but being unable to be present, sent the annexed letter.

## LETTER FROM C. L. ROBINSON.

JACKSONVILLE, FLA., Aug. 22d, 1872.

Merritt E. Goddard, Esq. South Reading, Vt.

MY DEAR SIR:—It is with great regret that I find, at the last moment, that I must relinquish my purpose of being with you at the Centennial Celebration of the settlement of our native town. Professional duties which cannot be neglected have frustrated a hope that I had entertained up to the present time, that I should still be able to join you on that most interesting occasion; and I now write to assure you, and the friends who meet on that day, of my hearty interest in the purposes of the gathering, and to tender my most cordial greeting.

Permit me also to assure you that I feel the loss of the pleasure I had anticipated in this gathering, to be a great disappointment; first, because it is always a great pleasure to me, at any time, to visit the scenes of my early life and to breathe once more the pure, bracing air of my beloved native mountains. How often during the stormy life it has been my fortune, for the most part, to lead—when worn and exhausted by crowding labors and heavy cares, have I gone to those quiet hills and breathed again my native air, and sat again at my mother's table and drank again from the same old spring which invigorated my early years—did strength and vigor speedily return and with, as it were, a new lease of life, have I returned to battle with the world once more.

But I had hoped to be with you at this great gathering of the sons and daughters of old Reading, that I might look again on the faces of the friends of my early life, and renew acquaintances and associations the remembrance of which have been a living pleasure through all the maturer years of my life.

Yet the chief interest and pleasure of that day will arise from the historical incidents and associations which will so naturally come forth from the years gone by to fill up the moments and bless that rare occasion. The recital of these, the recollection of the sacrifices and the struggles of our fathers in the early time, the comparison of the social and material condition of the people at the different periods of the country, noting the progress of society, the improvements in the arts and in the comforts which the courage and labor of our ancestors have secured to us, the physical vigor and moral courage and uprightness which we have inherited from them, and gathering from these all the great lessons of duty and charity which they will so forcibly teach—will make the day an event of such abounding profit and pleasure as it is not often our fortune to enjoy in life.

You will doubtless, on that occasion, observe that the sons of Reading have been moved as by a spirit of missions and you may note with interest and satisfaction, perhaps, the part they have acted, and the influence they have exerted in the widely scattered fields in which they have taken up their abode, and you will observe in



them the same spirit of independence and earnestness and the same uprightness of character that prevails among their native hills. The purity of the morals and habits of the people, as well as the purity and vigor of the mountain air, has established in all the sons of Vermont an integrity and strength of character that has always made them leading and valuable citizens wherever their lot has been cast. The first state in the Union in temperance reform, her youth are brought up free from the contamination of these evils and become settled and fixed in habits of virtue and industry before they leave the paternal roof; and wherever you find a Vermonter, whether amidst the lively scenes of the crude and growing west or the promising but slower going and more unfortunate south, or in the busy marts of the more settled states—you almost invariably find a man who is making his mark in the world, one who is going for some object, and whose earnest, steady efforts surely win success.

To this rule I believe the sons of old Reading form no exception. In looking for the associates of my childhood I find them scattered in every quarter of our vast country; and among them all, I know of none who are not solid and upright men, a power in the communities where they live and foremost in every cause that aims to elevate and bless mankind.

I trust you will have a large representation of these men with you on the 28th, and that the happy re-unions and associations of that day may reach its influence down through the century that is before us; and that the worthy examples of our noble sires and the reminiscences of the early years that shall there be gathered, may be preserved to all future time, helping to perpetuate the preeminent excellency and dignity of the people of our native state, making her always, as she is to-day, in everything that makes man noble useful and true, the first and fairest of all the sisterhood of states.

With many assurances of my unabated love for my native hills

I am, very truly and respectfully yours,

C. L. ROBINSON.

#### LETTER FROM GEO. O. ROBINSON.

Geo. O. Robinson, Esq. an Attorney at Law, of Detroit, Mich. was unable to be present, and sent the following letter:

DETROIT, MICH., August 20, 1872.

Merritt E. Goddard, Esq. Chairman of Committee on Invitation of the Centennial Celebration, Reading, Vermont:

DEAR SIR:—I have delayed answering your letter of the 8th ult., inviting me to attend and take part in the Centennial Celebration of my native town, in the hopes that I could arrange my affairs so as to be able to accept your kind invitation, but as the time approaches I find my engagements will preclude my attendance, very much against my personal wishes. In all the travel and vicissitudes of my thus far busy life, I have never for once for

gotten my "native hills;" and were I a poet, "My Native Hills" should be my theme for your Celebration. How well do I remember them! The peculiarities of their very faces are as indelibly impressed on my mind and memory as are those of my parents and childhood friends. How I love to roam over their summits, and what exhilarating views I there got of old Ascutney and the blue hills of New Hampshire! Dame Fortune has cast my lot in a flat, level country, and if there is one thing I sigh for more than another, it is for *those glorious old hills*. There is an impress and a characteristic for firmness and integrity which the hills of a mountainous country make on the mind of childhood, that can never be effaced by after life. Indeed, I hold, and I believe history bears me out in it, that those people reared in mountainous regions are characterized as indomitable, independent, unconquerable and virtuous. There is something ennobling to the mind in the ever-changing views and scenery of the grand old hills as well as something strengthening to the physique in the exercise which they developed. Then, too, the very air, so bracing, begets purity and strength. It is said, that in all of the numerous wars of the Continent, the people of Switzerland have never been conquered. The same traits have characterized the people of the Highlands of Scotland, and since the Revolutionary War, have characterized the people of our own Green Mountain State. Of the many fortunes of my life over which I have had to rejoice, not the least is the fact that I had my birth in the Green Mountain State, and first saw light among the hills of South Reading.

Remember me to the many friends that may be congregated on your festal day, and believe me, as in childhood,

Still your friend,

GEO. O. ROBINSON.

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#### LETTER FROM FRANK M. ROBINSON.

Frank M. Robinson, Esq., an Attorney at Law, of Dubuque, Iowa, sent the following letter:

DUBUQUE, IOWA, August 19, 1872.

Messrs. M. E. Goddard and C. F. Glynn, Committee of Invitation, and Citizens of Reading:

DEAR SIRs:—Your circular and a personal letter from my old friend, Mr. Goddard, has been received, cordially inviting me to be present on the 28th instant, and participate in the exercises of the Centennial Anniversary of the settlement of my native town.

I have delayed a sooner response thinking my personal affairs might be so arranged as to permit of my absence at that time. It is with sincere regret that I now feel compelled to inform you of my inability to be present and share in the welcomes and festivities of so eventful an occasion.

Remembering vividly the scenes and actors of the home of my childhood and youth, many of whom still survive the roll call of

time, while others have answered to the summons ;—remembering the homestead and family associations of nearly every cotter, his wife and wards ; the name and private and public relations of nearly every one of whom were as familiar to me as household emblems from 1840 to 1856 ;—remembering the mechanic, tradesman and farmer, with many of whom side by side, I have toiled in the field and from whom I learned lessons of persistent industry and rigid economy, of more real value to a young man at the start in life than much wealth or high station ; and remembering the longings of a boy, which can never be forgotten, I recall with what wonder and possibilities of life, home, pursuit and culture a youthful vision was clothed.

Memory fresh from the embers of the past, as if a Phenix, reminds me of the period when a son each of Daniel Hall and John Wheeler were the only persons from Reading, at that time and for many years afterwards, who received the advantages of a collegiate education. Having shared instruction with your children and acted as teacher and supervisor of your Common Schools, I now recall a somewhat eventful time in the history of the educational triumphs of Reading. Between 1851 and 1855 there were at one time six (6) of her sons upon College rolls ; a fact, I think, which cannot be truthfully stated of any other town, for any like space of time and of the same population, in the State.

I have listened at a Grandfather's knee,—a patriot of the Revolution,—who oft recounted incidents of that great struggle, and of his, and his associate's pioneer life in the early settlement of Reading, when your hillsides and valleys were pathless and clothed with primeval forests. I have a brief record of those events taken down from his lips, but this kind of reminiscence I leave to others of larger experience and information.

Sixteen years since my lot and home in your midst were transferred to *Iowa*, one of the grandest States of the Union. Once eliminate from her people the New England element and the direct and indirect results of that element, her character and prosperity would be paralyzed. Though rough and sharp the hills that girt you round and divide your villas, you are an integral part of Vermont and of New England. In general aspects your history and civilization are one. As a State, you may be proud not so much of the flinty rugged acres, which with adapted husbandry you cultivate, of your sleek stock, wholesome dairy, fine wool, and well arranged and spacious barns and homesteads,—as of that energy, uprightness and independence of character inspired by your healthy climate, by your christian communities, by the fostering care you weave into your laws for the education of your children and by the impress you, and your New England associates give to the principles, protection and honor of the nation, whereby your name, history and civilization are, and always have been the underlying strata and stimulant of the nation's progress and devel



opment. Your success is not so much the result of chance as inherent natural energy.

Your industries engender hopes rarely ever shaded with despondency, and hearts that never grow weary or timid in overcoming the obstacles of nature or the machinations of contriving men.

Your sons and daughters are not enervated and contaminated by and, I might almost say, are unknown to hereditary wealth or ancestral aristocracy.

My old home is in Reading. My ancestral line is interwoven with your traditions, your history. I am proud that it is so, nor shall the many and enticing allurements of western enterprise and unequal growth, nor breadth of rivers, lakes and magnificent States, wean me of the love I bear in my heart, for the home of my fathers, your homes and the good old Green Mountain State.

Regretting my inability to be with you and share in the exercises of an event so full of memories, you will accept my thanks for your kind invitation and my wishes for your happiness and continued prosperity.

Very respectfully

FRANK M. ROBINSON.

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LETTER FROM S. W. ROBINSON.

CHAMPAIGN, ILL., Aug. 21st, 1872.

Merritt E. Goddard, Esq.

DEAR FRIEND:—I received yours of July 4th some time ago, containing invite to be with you on the Centennial occasion, and also inclosing invitation and compliments of the committee of invitation.

It would afford me the greatest pleasure to celebrate with you that One Hundredth Anniversary of the first settlement of Reading, Vt., that "good old Town," in that good old State, which I most highly honor, and feel proud to call my own native town and state. But engagements made previous to the reception of your invitation render it impossible for me to take the time necessary to make the trip. Although connected with the Illinois Industrial University, which has a summer vacation, yet in my effort to make Mechanical Education, in connection with an institution of learning, a success, I find my labor, at present at least, without vacation and without ceasing. However arduous the labor, and difficult the problem; I feel that the object is a noble one, as witnessed by the fact that most (I think we may safely say) of the comforts of to-day are due to the mechanic arts and sciences. It is these which bring comfort to the household, ease to the agriculturist and the manufacturer, and power to the nation. The time was when the woodsman was our pioneer, and he was found in the vanguard of civilization. Not only beyond the Hudson, but across the western plains has he followed closely upon the heels of the red man. But the iron horse now drives the Indian with a quicker pace, and chases the flying

buffalo beyond the Mississippi. The locomotive is now most emphatically our pioneer. The settler, instead of leading now waits to follow him into the far interior, where he depends upon the railroad for indispensable comforts from our manufacturing towns. Who would deny that the mechanic arts and science is an agent of civilization whose potency is not excelled except by the Bible itself; and who would in this day bring his foot down upon the busy whittlings, the mosquito wheels and clap traps of the youthful genii? Vermont has performed her part in turning out scientific men, and even in Reading there may have been seen the evidences of the working of that spirit, dauntless for of Yankce origin, which finds no relish in agricultural pursuits, but which finds its exact counterpart in a branch of industry none the less honorable and noble.

Although Vermont is apparently chiefly agricultural, it has still performed a mission perhaps unobserved by many, which is far higher than raising sheep and cattle. It has turned out men, who, alive with an intelligence and energy commensurate only with the freshness of their native mountains, hills and valleys, pure air and crystal streams, are now found in all parts of the Union, serving in their proper spheres of labor as leaders in true politics, education, agriculture, arts and manufactures, temperance, morals and religion. Who would not glory in being numbered, if possible, with them?

Your most humble servant, and native of Reading, Vermont,  
S. W. ROBINSON.

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#### LETTER FROM LYSANDER M. DAVIS, ESQ, OF ALABAMA.

The author is a lawyer by profession, and has suffered much for his Union principles. He has been a life long democrat, but when the South rebelled against the Union he refused to go with them, and has ever remained a true friend to the government.

PINE HILL, Wilcox Co., Aug. 11, 1872.

To M. E. Goddard, G. A. Davis and W. W. Keyes, Committee of Arrangements, and citizens of Reading:

GENTLEMEN:—A native of your town, who from the days of youth has been a wanderer and sojourner in distant lands; traveling from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from the lakes of Canada to the isthmus of Panama; but whose heart has ever turned in fond affection to the old homestead in the valley, and ever remembered the place where his eyes first opened on the light of heaven, as the brightest gem that nestles among the green hills of his native state, on this joyous day from his distant home in the far South, asks leave to send you a friendly greeting.

On the committees I see a few familiar names; but after an absence of forty-two years, I find the larger portion of them strangers. You dwell in your pleasant homes in peace and safety, none dare molest or make you afraid in your domestic or public enjoyments



How different the case with the loyal citizens of the South. If we attempt to celebrate the fourth of July, a day dear to our hearts, or display an American flag that we so dearly love to look upon, it is at the peril of our lives. It seems to me not amiss, that on this festive day, when your hearts are all aglow with happiness and joy, to bespeak your sympathy and kindly feeling for your less fortunate fellow citizens of the South, whose hearts have been loyal to the American Union. During the war we suffered all manner of evil from the traitors who fought against our country. Our property, the fruit of long years of toil, was seized by the rebel government, which regarded us as their enemies, and our substance passed away from us as dew before the morning sun. This was to be expected while the war lasted; but when victory perched upon the Union banners, and peace came, we reasonably expected protection from the national government. The Orangemen are protected, Dr. Howard is protected, American citizens native and naturalized are protected against violence in every foreign nation. This is all right; then why should not those, who in the midst of the nation's enemies, at the time of great national danger, sought to uphold the flag of their country, find protection beneath its ample folds from the violence of those who would destroy them for that act. This whole land is filled with bands of disguised men who travel the country at midnight, burn churches, school houses and dwelling houses, hang and shoot Union men, or whip and order them to leave the state. In fact the life of no loyal citizen is safe if he does anything expressive of his sentiments.

Is it too much for me to ask the freemen of my native town, who stand in the front rank of the liberty loving sons of Vermont, to use their influence through their representative in the national legislature, to have such laws passed as will give complete protection to those men of the South who have suffered so much loss for their attachment to the national government?

With the most sincere desire that you, your sons and beauteous daughters, may in all future time dwell in peace and safety in your happy homes on the green hillsides and in the pleasant valleys of your native town; also, that the time may speedily come when loyal men in happy homes on the sunny, fertile plains of the South may enjoy the same blessing,

I am with much respect and esteem, your fellow citizen,

LYSANDER M. DAVIS.

## COMMITTEES AND OFFICERS OF THE DAY.

*Committees.*—M. E. Goddard, G. A. Davis, and W. W. Keyes committee to invite the speakers, arrange the programme for the Celebration, and provide Music.

Committee to select a site for the ceremonies, arrange the ground, appoint the officers of the day and raise funds by subscription :

Dr. W. S. Robinson, Marcus M. Kendall, Honestus Stearns Ferdinand Hawkins, Dexter Buck, Albert Eastman, E. O. Sherwin, Wm. C Bement, Samuel Morgan, Morris C. Newton, Fred C. Warren, Edgar Stearns, A. W. Goddard, L. C. Davis, A. P. Watkins, Charles Buck, Eugene Parker, and Joseph S. Bond.

Committee to arrange for the free Collation and take charge of the same :

|                       |                              |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| Mr. & Mrs. O. Coburn, | Mr. & Mrs. Marcellus Bryant, |
| “ L. G. Coolidge,     | “ J. S. Ainsworth,           |
| “ Geo. H. Buck,       | “ Geo. W. Rich,              |
| “ O. D. Amsden,       | “ Oren Walker,               |
| “ P. Kinsman,         | “ Charles A. Davis,          |
| “ A. F. Wilkins,      | Miss Annis Buck,             |
| “ Sumner Fletcher,    | Mr. Edward M. North,         |
| “ David E. Burnham.   | Mr. & Mrs. L. Bailey.        |

Charles Buck, Wm. Felch, Volney Hammond, Merritt E. Goddard and Gilbert A. Davis, Committee to make researches as to the history of Reading, with a view to their preservation and ultimate publication, if thought advisable.

Committee to take charge of firing salute : Otis Baldwin.

Committee on Vocal Music E. Dexter, O. S. Holden, Geo. W. Shedd, and Samuel Morgan.

Committee on Invitation M. E. Goddard, C. L. Glynn.

*Officers of the Day.*—President, Dr. W. S. Robinson. Vice Presidents, W. Felch, Chas. Buck, S. C. Shedd, Levi C. Fay Daniel Stearns, Chas. A. Forbush, J. Q. Hawkins, M. E. Goddard F. Hawkins, A. W. Goddard, P. Merrill.

Secretary, Gilbert A Davis.

Chaplains, Revs. J. S. Small and Ira Carter.

Chief Marshal, L. G. Coolidge.

Aids, W. W. Keyes, Norman W. Wood, Marcus M. Kendall C. S. Whitmore, F. Hawkins.

Police, F. G. Persons, O. D. Amsden, C. A. Morse, Henry Bryant, Simon M. Buck, Francis Gould, Edgar Stearns, Hobert Pratt Carlos Bryant.

## PART SECOND.

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### HISTORY OF READING.

#### CHAPTER I.

1754. On the 30th day of August the little settlement at Charlestown, N. H., was surprised by a party of Indians from Canada. Capt. James Johnson, his wife and three children, his wife's sister Miriam Willard, Peter Labaree and Ebenezer Farnsworth were made prisoners and on the same day started on their tedious and painful journey to Canada. The first encampment was on the night of the 30th on a branch of Black River near the base of Little Ascutney. The men were made secure that night by having their legs put in split sticks, somewhat like stocks, and tied with cords, which were tied to the limbs of trees too high to be reached. Miss Willard much to her mortification, was compelled to lie between two Indians with a cord thrown over her and passing under each of them; the little children had blankets, and one was furnished for Mrs. Johnson who was in an advanced stage of pregnancy.

In the morning the captives were aroused before sunrise. The Indians struck a fire, hung on their stolen kettles and made some water gruel for breakfast. Mrs. Johnson was put upon a horse, with her husband by her side to hold her on; Mr. Labaree and Mr. Farnsworth each took a little girl, and thus marching sorrowfully on, these captives, the first white persons known to have stepped upon the soil of Reading, crossed Knapp's brook near the present residence of N. Parson's, and encamped on the north side of that brook, Mrs. Johnson having added to her multiplied afflictions the pangs of child birth. Leaving the main party at the encampment, Mrs. Johnson and some of the Indians proceeded about one-half mile up the brook and within the territory of the town of Cavendish the Indians erected a booth. The circumstances are best narrated by Mrs. Johnson:

"Here the compassionate reader will drop a fresh tear for my inexpressible distress ; fifteen or twenty miles from the abode of any civilized being, in the open wilderness, rendered cold by a rainy day—in one of the most perilous hours, and unsupplied with the least necessary that could yield convenience in the hazardous moment. My children were crying at a distance, where they were held by their masters, and only my husband and sister to attend me ; none but mothers can figure to themselves my unhappy fortune. The Indians kept aloof the whole time. About ten o'clock a daughter was born. They then brought me some articles of clothing for the child, which they had taken from the house. My master looked into the booth, and clapped his hands for joy, crying 'two moneys for me, two moneys for me ;' I was permitted to rest the remainder of the day. The Indians were employed in making a bier for the prisoners to carry me on, and another booth for my lodging during the night. They brought me a needle and two pins and some bark to tie the child's clothes, which they gave my sister and a large wooden spoon to feed it with ; at dark they made some porridge, and brought a cup to steep some roots in which Mr. Labaree had provided. In the evening I was removed to the new booth. For supper, they made more porridge and some johnny cakes. My portion was brought me in a little bark. I slept that night far beyond my expectation."

This night's encampment was in Reading.

"In the morning we were summoned for the journey, after the usual breakfast of meal and water. I, with my infant in my arms, was laid on the litter which was supported alternately by Mr. Johnson, Labaree and Farnsworth. My sister and son were put upon Scoggin, and the two little girls rode on their master's backs. Thus we proceeded two miles, when my carriers grew too faint to proceed any farther. This being observed by our sable masters, a general halt was called, and they embodied themselves for council. My master soon made signs to Mr. Johnson that if I could ride on the horse I might proceed, otherwise I must be left behind. Here I observed marks of pity in his countenance, but this might arise from the fear of losing his two moneys. I preferred an attempt to ride on the horse rather than to perish miserably alone. Mr. Labaree took the infant, and every step of the horse almost deprived me of life. My weak and helpless condition rendered me, in a degree, insensible to everything ; my poor child could have no sustenance from my breast, and was supported entirely by water gruel. My other little children, rendered peevish by an uneasy mode of riding, often burst into cries, but a surly check from their masters soon silenced them. We proceeded on with a slow, mournful pace. My weakness was too severe to allow me to sit on the horse long at a time ; every hour I was taken off and laid on the ground to rest. This preserved my life during the third day. At night we found ourselves at the head of Black River Pond. Here we prepared to spend the night, our supper consisted of gruel



and broth of a hawk they had killed the preceding day. The prisoners were secured as usual. A booth was made for me, and all went to rest. \* \* \* The night was uncommonly dark, and passed tediously off."

The route taken by this party led through Felchville and South Reading into Plymouth.

The child born under circumstances so peculiar was named Elizabeth Captive Johnson, and subsequently became the wife of Col. George Kimball, and their union was blessed with several children. One of her daughters married Jason Wetherby, Esq. Sophia Wetherby, daughter of Jason, married Oel Billings, Esq., late of Woodstock, Vt., and her son, the Hon. Frederick Billings, is therefore a direct descendant of the little captive.

These captives were taken to Montreal, where Mr. Johnson obtained a parole of two months to return and solicit the means of redemption—the ransom money being the motive for the capture as well as the harassing of the English settlements in the prosecution of the war between the French and English. Mr. Johnson applied to the Assembly of New Hampshire and after some delay, on the 19th of December 1754, obtained £150. But on account of the severity of the winter he did not reach Canada until spring; he was then charged with breaking his parole, a great part of his money was taken from him by force, and he and his family were thrown into prison, where among other afflictions, they all had the small pox, though successfully. At the expiration of eighteen months, Mrs. Johnson with her sister and daughters were sent in a cartel ship to England, and thence returned to Boston. Mr. Johnson suffered imprisonment for three years and then with his son returned and met his wife in Boston. His eldest daughter was retained in a Canadian nunnery.

In September 1797 and in August 1798, Mrs. Johnson returned to the spot of the encampment on the night succeeding the birth of Captive, and to the spot of the birth, and having fully identified those historical spots, again visited them in 1799 accompanied by Mr. Peter Labaree, and subsequently two slabs of blue slate stone were erected on the stage road near Knapp's brook, to commemorate these events. The larger slab has upon it the following inscription.

This is near the spot  
that the Indians Encamp'd the  
Night after they took M<sup>r</sup> Johnson &  
Family M<sup>r</sup> Labaree & Farnsworth  
August 30<sup>th</sup> 1754 And Mrs.  
Johnson was delivered of her child  
Half a mile up this Brook  
When troubl<sup>e</sup> near the Lord is kind  
He hears the Captives Cry  
He can subdue the savage mind  
And learn it sympathy.

By the side of this slab stands a slab much smaller and bearing the following inscription :

On the 31<sup>st</sup> of  
August 1754  
Cap<sup>t</sup> James  
Johnson had  
A daughter born  
on this spot of  
Ground being  
Captivated with  
his whole Family  
by the Indians.

" If mothers e'er should wander here,  
They'll drop a sympathetic tear  
For her, who in the howling wild,  
Was safe delivered of a child."

This smaller slab should be removed about half a mile up Knapp's brook and placed on the spot where the child was born, that spot being near the existing highway that has been built on the north side of that brook. The last visit paid by Mrs. Johnson to that interesting spot was in June 1808, in company with Col. Kimball and his wife, her daughter, E. Captive and Capt. Sherwin and Mr. Demell Grout. Speaking of this visit, Mrs. J. says :

" After reviewing the scene, and contemplating on the striking contrast a few moments, to add to the sensibility, we sat down and partook of a repast, and regaled ourselves with liquor mixed with water from the same fountain that I and my child first partook of in that gloomy and sorrowful day of trouble and affliction. Then my fare was meagre meal and water, and steeped roots, and a large *wooden spoon* to feed my infant babe ; now we had the best of liquid spirits, and eatables, which in comparison might be said to be dainties. The contrast is too great for pen to describe."

The lapse of time furnishes a contrast between the ordinary refreshments of to-day and those of even no earlier day than 1808. It is to be hoped that even " the best of liquid spirits " hardly create such enthusiasm among the elderly ladies of to-day.

Reading is not known to have been the home of any tribe of Indians but constituted a part of the great hunting and fighting ground of the Indian tribes on the north and south.

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## CHAPTER II—CHARTERS AND EARLY SETTLEMENTS.

The towns of Windsor, Reading, and Plymouth were severally chartered on the same day, July 6, 1761, each six miles square ; but in surveying Windsor, it was laid six and one half miles east and west ; this made the west line of Windsor about thirty feet east of Felchville Hotel. About 1780 Col. Nathan Stone of Windsor, discovered this fact and applied to the Royal Gov. Benning Wentworth of N. H., for a charter of the half mile strip ; he de-

clined until the towns were notified ; this occasioned a controversy between the towns, each claiming the strip.

In 1786, Reading appointed Aaron Kimball, Nedabiah Cady, David Hapgood, Thomas Fay, John Weld, Nathaniel Pratt and Abel Jewett a committee to perambulate the line.

Jan. 5, 1790, the matter was finally settled, by running the line from the south-east to the north-west corner of the strip, giving to each town a gore.

This agreement was signed by Nathan Stone, Benj. Green, Jera-thumel Cummings, Charles Leavens and Joseph Barrett for Wind-sor, Abijah Stone, David Hapgood, Moses Chaplain and Samuel Sherwin for Reading, and witnessed by Joseph Wakefield and Leonard Cummings, and duly recorded in both towns.

The following is a copy of this charter :

Reading,

Province of New Hampshire.

L. S. George the Third, By the Grace of God of Great Britain, France and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith &c.

To all persons to whom these Presents shall come,

Greeting :

Know ye, that we, of our special grace, certain knowledge and mere motion, for the due encouragement of settling a new plantation within our said Province, by and with the advice of our trusty and well beloved, Benning Wentworth Esq., our Governor and Com-mander in Chief of our said Province of New Hampshire in New England, and of our council of the said Province, have, upon the conditions and reservations hereinafter made, given and granted, and by these Presents for us, our heirs and successors do give and grant in equal shares unto our loving subjects, inhabitants of our said Province of New Hampshire and our other Governments and to their heirs and assigns forever whose names are entered on this Grant, to be divided to and amongst them into sixty-eight equal shares all that tract or parcel of land, situate, lying and being within our said Province of New Hampshire, containing by ad-measurement 23000 acres, which tract is to contain six miles square and no more, out of which an allowance is to be made for highways and unimprovable lands by rocks, ponds, mountains and rivers, one thousand and forty acres, free, according to a plan and survey there-of made by our said Governor's order and returned into the Secretary's office and hereunto annexed, butted and bounded as follows, viz :—Beginning at the south west corner of Windsor from thence north  $4^{\circ}$  west six miles—from thence north  $15^{\circ}$  east six miles and three quarters of a mile—thence south sixty-five degrees east five miles and one half mile to the north west corner of Windsor—thence south ten degrees west six miles on Windsor line to the bounds first mentioned—and that the same be and hereby is incorporated into a township by the name of Reading, and the inhabitants that do or shall inhabit the said township are hereby declared to be enfran-



chised with and entitled to all and every the privileges and immunities that other towns within our Province by law exercise and enjoy, and further that the said town as soon as there shall be fifty families resident and settled thereon shall have the liberty of holding two Fairs, one of which shall be held on the                      and the other on the                      annually, which Fairs are not to continue longer than the respective                      following the said

and that as soon as the said town shall consist of fifty families a market may be opened and kept one or more days in each week as may be thought most advantageous to the inhabitants. Also, that the first meeting for the choice of town officers agreeable to the laws of our said Province shall be held on the last Tuesday in July Instant, which said meeting shall be notified by Zedekiah Stone who is hereby also appointed the moderator of the said first meeting which he is to notify and govern according agreeable to the laws and customs of our said Province, and that the annual meeting forever hereafter for the choice of such officers for the said town shall be on the second Tuesday of March annually.

To have and to hold the said tract of land as above expressed together with all privileges and appurtenances to them and their respective heirs and assigns forever upon the following conditions viz:

I. That every grantee, his heirs or assigns shall plant and cultivate five acres of land within the term of five years for every fifty acres contained in his or her share or proportion of land in said township and continue to improve and settle the same by additional cultivations on the penalty of the forfeiture of his grant or share in the said township and of its reverting to us, our heirs and successors, to be by us or them re-granted to such of our subjects as shall effectually settle and cultivate the same.

II That all white and other pine trees within the said township fit for masting our Royal Navy be carefully preserved for that use and none to be cut or felled without our special license for so doing first had and obtained upon the penalty of the forfeiture of the right of such grantee, his heirs and assigns to us, our heirs and successors as well as being subject to the penalty of any Act or Acts of Parliament that now are or hereafter shall be enacted.

III. That before any division of the land be made to and among the grantees a tract of land as near the centre of the said township as the land will admit of shall be reserved and marked out for town lots, one of which shall be allotted to each grantee of the contents of one acre.

IV. Yielding and paying therefor to us, our heirs and successors for the space of ten years to be computed from the date hereof the rent of one ear of Indian corn only on the 25th day of December annually, if lawfully demanded, the first payment to be made on the 25th day of December 1762.

V. Every proprietor, settler or inhabitant shall yield and pay unto us, our heirs and successors yearly and every year forever from



and after the expiration of ten years from the above said 25th day of December which will be in the year of our Lord, 1772 one shilling Proclamation money for every hundred acres he owns, settles or possesses and so in proportion for a greater or lesser tract of the said land—which money shall be paid by the respective persons above said, their heirs or assigns in our Council Chamber in Portsmouth, or to such officer or officers as shall be appointed to receive the same, and this to be in lieu of all other rents and services whatsoever.

In testimony whereof we have caused the seal of our said Province to be hereunto affixed. [Seal.]

Witness, Benning Wentworth Esq, our Governor and Commander in Chief of our said Province the sixth day of July, in the year of our Lord Christ one thousand seven hundred and sixty-one and in the first year of our reign.

B. WENTWORTH.

By his Excellency's Command,  
with advice of Council.

THEODORE ATKINSON, Sec'y—

Province of New Hampshire.

Recorded according to the Original under the Provincial Seal  
this 6th day of July 1761.

THEODORE ATKINSON, Secretary.

### The Names of the Grantees of Reading.

edekiah Stone,  
ames Clements,  
ohn Buttterfield,  
oseph Martin,  
oseph Howell,  
ichael Metcalf,  
ames Putman,  
onas Wheeler,  
ohn Willson,  
aleb Stone,  
William Neyos,  
avid Stone,  
hayer Adams,  
lizabeth Mattoon.  
eth Eaton,  
benezer Winslow,  
oseph Chandler,  
athan Willard,  
aniel Pond,  
acob Amsdell,  
oshua Willard,  
omas Clemmons,  
aniel Spooner,

Israel Stowell.  
Jonathan Hammond,  
William Grimes,  
Nathan Stone,  
Wm. Jeneson Sterns,  
Jacob Addams,  
John Sawyer  
John Wilder Junr.,  
Joseph Neyos,  
Nathaniel Stevens,  
Phillip Mattoon,  
Jonathan Sanderson,  
David Nims,  
Simon Stevens,  
Jonathan Prescott,  
John Wait,  
Joel Stone,  
Timothy Heald,  
George Robins,  
Joseph Stowell,  
Wm. Sinead,  
Nathaniel Sanderson,  
Thomas Stearns,

William Temple,  
Isaac Butterfield,  
Wiseman Clagget Esq.  
Henry Hilton,  
Sam'l Wentworth of Boston,  
Henry Loyd of Boston,  
George March,  
Daniel Warner Esq.,

Timothy Paine,  
John Wilder.  
John Hilton,  
Capt. Thomas Palmer,  
Sam'l Wentworth of Portsmouth  
Arthur Brown Junr.,  
Robert Trail Esq.,  
Joseph Newmarch Esq.,

One whole share for the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, one share for the First settled minister of the Gospel, one share for the benefit of a school in said town, one share for a glebe for the Church of England, as by law established, for his Excellency Benning Wentworth Esq, a tract of land to contain five hundred acres which is to be accounted two of the within shares, marked B. W. on the plan

Recorded according to the  
original Charter under the  
Prov. Seal 6th day of June, 1761  
THEODORE ATKINSON, Secy.

Province of New Hampshire  
Recorded from the back of the  
Charter of Reading the 6th  
day of July 1761.  
THEODORE ATKINSON, Secy.

Wm. Tyron, the royal governor of the province of New York however claimed jurisdiction so far east as the Connecticut river and granted the same territory May 30, 1772, to Simon Stevens and others.

Simon Stevens was in those troublesome days termed a "Yorker," and undoubtedly obtained a share of this township to reward his fidelity to the Governor of New York.

He was a prominent character in the early history of eastern Vermont.

Col. Nathan Stone of Windsor was influential in obtaining the charter, and the original charter remained in his possession until his death, and was not deposited in Reading Town Clerk's office until 1865.

This unfortunate controversy about the lawful jurisdiction over the grant rendered the titles to lands in Reading uncertain, and retarded the settlement of the township. It is not my purpose to furnish any details of this. The story to a student of Vermont history is as familiar as a twice told tale, and there is considerable in it about Ethan Allen, Remember Baker, the Yorkers at the "birchen seal," but Reading was never the scene of any of the conflicts of those days, conflicts that have made Chester County House, Westminster Court House, Guilford and Brattleboro familiar to every student of American history. A few traces

this controversy may be found upon the records. There seems to have been doubts among the early settlers as to whether Reading was in New York, New Hampshire or Vermont.

Referring to the records, in the deed from Phineas Stevens to Andrew Spear of Walpole, in the Province of New Hampshire, dated Aug. 20, 1772, in consideration of £7 is conveyed one full and whole right and share of land in Reading, in the County of Cumberland, in the Province of New York, containing 350 acres, being the whole of the right of David Nims, one of the grantees under the N. H. Charter. This Mr. Spear was the first settler of the town, and his view seems to have been that the famous Order in Council made by king George, July 20, 1764, wherein he declared "the western bank of the river Connecticut \* \* \* to be the boundary line between the said two provinces of New Hampshire and New York," was not intended to be retrospective in its operation, but only as settling that the western bank of the Connecticut river should be from that time forward only, the line of division between the two provinces, and "consequently that their grants, being derived from the crown through the medium of one of its governors, were valid;" and hence our sturdy settler bought land at about ten cents an acre in the state of New York but under a New Hampshire title.

June 16, 1777, Barakiah Cady, whose descendents are now with us, purchased of Wm. Grimes, one whole right of land in the township of Reading in the New Hampshire Grants, but the deed contained this clause: "But I, said William am not to defend said land against the claims of New York, but the said Barakiah Cady is to his risk upon my only quitting my right and title."

In 1778 land here is described here as lying in the township of Reading and state of New York."

In 1779, in one conveyance the land is described as "in the state of New York," and in another as a quantity of land lying in the township of Reading in the state of New York *alias* Vermont. In 1771, the township is described as in Vermont.

1779. The proprietors of a township and the residents of a township, maintained separate and distinct organizations, and records, the former for the proper division and sale of lands and the latter for the ordinary purposes of local government.

The proprietors of Reading did not organize according to the provisions of the charter on the day therein named, but their first meeting was holden at the house of Alexander Parmerlee, in Windsor, on the 16th June, 1779, having been legally warned by advertising said meeting in the Connecticut newspaper according to Law of Vermont, then existing. Mr. Andrew Spear was chosen moderator and Capt. John Weld proprietors' clerk.

Voted, that "John Weld, James Sawyer, Seth Sabin, Joseph Sawyer, Jedediah Leavens, John Sawyer, Hezekiah Leavens and Samuel Gary have liberty to pitch and settle upon 850 acres of land, in a body, so as to make a convenient neighborhood" as

those persons and a committee appointed by the proprietors might select, and Andrew Spear and James Call were appointed a committee to assist John Weld and his associates in selecting said lands.

To each proprietor was granted liberty to pitch 100 acres, as laid out under the New Hampshire grant.

1780. Another meeting was held at Mr. Parmerlee's house, April 11, 1780, and voted a tax of two dollars on each right "to be used in making a road from Windsor to Saltash and for building bridges on said road" and Asa Phelps was chosen collector of the tax. The road should be completed before the next October, and Ebenezer Davis, Jedediah Leavens and Nathan Call were chosen committee "to see the work be faithfully done." This time was subsequently extended to Nov. 1, 1781. A committee of five was chosen to perambulate the line between Windsor and Reading.

An adjourned meeting was holden at Andrew Spear's dwelling house in Reading, Aug. 22d, when it was voted that each proprietor who will settle forthwith have liberty to pitch 300 acres in a body or in as many lots as he will put settlers on and pitch according to the New Hampshire survey—this liberty to continue for one year.

Ebenezer Davis and Barakiah Cady were chosen a committee to assist the selectmen in laying out the road from Windsor to Saltash.

1781. At another meeting holden May 16, 1781, at Mr. Spear's, Andrew Spear, Asa Wilkins and Benjamin Cady were chosen a committee to "new-run the lines of y<sup>e</sup> house lots."

1783. John Weld was succeeded as proprietors' clerk by Thos. Hapgood in Sept. 3d, 1773, at which meeting John Weld, Joseph Wakfield and Thos. Hapgood were chosen a committee to look up and lay out the public lands. Wm. Howard, Wm. Hawkins (1811) and John S. Hawkins (1819) subsequently held the office of Proprietors' clerk.

Sept. 8th the proprietors voted "that if Benjamin Tyler of Claremont have a grist mill in Reading completed by 20th Sept. 1783, and a good saw mill completed by March 1st, 1784" to give him the 100 acre lot of land on which such erections should be made.

A tax of three shillings and sixpence hard money was laid on each share of land "to defray the expense of procuring the Hampshire Charter" and laying out the public lands.

These public lands were laid out by said committee in March, 1784 in the south west part of the town and were lots Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 4 in the 9th range and Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 4 in the 10th range and Nos. 2, 3 and 4 in the 11th range.

The records of these years from 1779 to 1783 are principally made up of "Pitches," the surveyors being Scottoway Whitcomb, Oliver Williams, Jon't. Whitney, Jesse Williams, Sylvanus Bennet, Joseph Gary, Alpheus Morse and Jona Atherton.



## CHAPTER III—EARLY SETTLERS.

Following Andrew Spear in 1772, Barakiah Cady in 1777, David Hapgood, John Weld, James Sawyer, Seth Sawyer, Joseph Sawyer, Jedediah Leavens, John Sawyer, Hezekiah Leavens and Samuel Gary in 1779, there came from Killingly, Conn., in 1780, Nedebliah Cady, who cleared up and settled on the farm now owned by Geo. W. Davis, and was for many years a highly respectable citizen. He was the father of Jefferson Cady, Esq.

Benjamin Buck, then about 12 years of age came with Mr. Cady and lived with him until his majority. Mr. Buck married Ellen Leavens and was blessed with a large family of children, four of whom are now respected citizens of their native town, viz: Benj. Jr., b. Nov. 10, 1791, Martha, b. July 16, 1794, Hannah, b. Dec. 15, 1796, Ellen, b. Nov. 6, 1802, Rufus, b. June 2, 1805, Dexter, b. May 26, 1810, Caroline, b. May 22, 1812. Nedebliah Cady was soon followed by Perley Cady who married Hannah Buck, Samuel Buck, Benoni Buck and later by Simeon Buck, all of whom made settlements in the woods as it was then called, and all except Benoni Buck settled in the north-easterly part of the town afterwards called Caper Hill. Benoni bought land of John Weld and settled where Sylvester Coburn now resides. Several of them were often chosen to public offices (*to wit*,) Samuel was a Baptist Deacon, Benoni was a Class-leader in the Methodist society also a justice of the peace and overseer of poor and captain of militia. Simeon Buck was several times chosen to represent the town in the legislature, a justice of the peace, overseer of poor, collector of taxes and constable and was also a military captain. Nedebliah Cady was constable and collector for several years. Samuel Buck cleared up the farm now occupied by Chas. B. Thomas. He reared a large family and died March 1, 1848 aged 84. Benjamin Buck died Oct. 22, 1857, aged 89 years, Benoni Buck died Nov. 13, 1821 aged 52 years, and Simeon Buck died June 13, 1861, aged 88 years, all of whom were men of influence and unullied character: And of their male descendents only four now remain in town, Benjamin Buck, Charles Buck, Rufus Buck and Dexter Buck. Charles Buck has represented the town in the legislature four times, been several times chosen selectman, grand juror, overseer of poor and a justice of the peace, nearly every year since 1826. Rufus Buck has been chosen constable and collector and overseer of poor several times. Benoni Buck a son of Benoni senior, (not now living in town,) held the office of State senator two years, town representative two years, selectman and justice of the peace several years, and was a captain of militia.

Benjamin Sawyer came from Pomfret, Conn., about 1780, and settled upon and cleared up the farm now owned by Chas. A. Davis, and in 1796 built the house now standing thereon.

He was a large farmer and for a time kept a hotel.

His son, Benj. Sawyer Jr., kept a hotel at the "Sawyer stand" now owned by E. M. North, from 1827 to 1834, and from 1840 to 1843. This hotel was on one of the main thoroughfares from Windsor to Rutland, and for many years lines of stages between those important towns passed this hotel, carrying the U. S. mail. The building of the Rutland and Barlington R. R. diverted travel from this route and compelled the closing of the hotel.

1781. April 14<sup>th</sup> John Sherwin then of Rindge, N. H., purchased for £150, of Eleizer Coffeen 200 acres of land in Reading and the same season built his cabin on the farm now owned by H. Stearns. He subsequently sold this land to Alpheus Garey and in Oct. 1800, bought for \$400 100 acres of land, including the land east of the main street in Felchville from L. R. Kendall's farm to the "Abel Amsden farm." Moses Chaplin came the same year and settled on the farm now owned by Albert Eastman, Esq.

From 1772 to 1782 but slight progress seems to have been made in the settlement of Reading. But for the next nine years pioneer settlers appear to have been scattered generally over the town so that in 1791 the inhabitants numbered 747, and the close of the next nine years found a population of 1123, though the people were hardly furnished with houses and domestic conveniences. Log cabins had in many instances given place to rude framed domicils but most of these were rough board or clapboard shells, without any inside ceiling or plastered walls, with rude doors with wooden latches and latch strings, and possessed of numerous crevices that gave the chilling winds of autumn and the driving snows of winter familiar acquaintance with the inmates.

The historical address delivered at the Centennial, embraces the main facts in history of the town and the Hon. Sewall Fullan having so exhaustively gathered the dates and facts relating to the building of the different stores, mills, taverns &c., in town, and embraced them in his address (published elsewhere) delivered at the Centennial, that the editor has not deemed it advisable to compile these facts and dates into a succinct narrative, but has preferred to insert sketches of the families who have had a home in Reading so far as the materials at his command have enabled him.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS AND CHURCH-BUILDING.

A Congregational church was organized at an early date and the Rev. Nahum Sargeant of Chelsea, Mass., was chosen pastor June 26, 1787, and on the same day the town voted to settle Mr. Sargeant in the ministry. One share of land in town under the provisions of the N. H. Charter, vested in Mr. Sargeant as the first settled minister, and accordingly Joseph Crary, proprietors' surveyor on the 30th May, 1789, surveyed to Mr. Sargeant 125 acres under this right. This land was near the centre of the town, on

the road (now discontinued) leading southerly from David E. Burnham's.

One hundred and seventy-five acres were also surveyed to Mr. Sargeant under this right May 17, 1789, bounded westerly on Sal-tash line. He erected a log house on the 125 acre tract and occupied the same until the erection on the same lot of a two story frame house with considerable pretensions to style and finish, which he occupied until his death in 1792. This house was long ago taken down. Mr. Sargeant left surviving him two daughters, Martha W. and Betsey, who subsequently resided in Malden, Mass.

The town under the Act of 1783 settled the minister and imposed his support upon the tax-payers by a general tax. This was then the law and policy of the state, and from the principle as set forth in the preamble of that act, "that it is of the greatest importance to the community at large, as well as to individuals that the precepts of christianity and rules of morality be public-ly and statedly inculcated on the minds of the inhabitants." That act required 25 legal voters to be in favor of such support, and provided further that every resident person of adult age should be considered as being of opinion with the majority and liable to pay the tax voted for support of the settled minister and the building of a meeting house, 'until he, she or they shall bring a certificate, signed by some minister of the gospel, deacon or elder, or the moderator in the church or congregation to which he, she or they pretend to belong, being of a different persuasion,' and until duly recorded in the town records.

The majority of the early settlers of Reading were Congregationalists, and as late as 1797 preaching by clergymen of that denomination was supported by a tax upon the grand list.

The records of these "certificates" indicate that there were a respectable minority of Episcopalians, Baptists, Universalists, and members of an organization described as the "society of Christians known by the name of the Federal Society."

A Baptist church was organized in Reading at the house of Isaac Kendall Dec. 25, 1788, and Simeon Wetherbee chosen moderator. Asa Wilkins was moderator of this society from 1790 to '92, and Daniel Edson in 1793 and '4. The town voted March 2, 1791, on motion of Asa Wilkins, that the denomination of Baptists are clear from paying rates to the Presbyterians in Reading.

The "Reformed Catholic Society" was organized in Reading Dec. 12, 1796, with 36 members, viz:

Benjamin Sawyer,  
Eben'r Robinson,  
John Weld,  
James Perry,  
Cornelius Sawyer,  
Simeon Wetherell,  
George Foster,

John Bixby,  
Ebenezer Weld,  
John Rice,  
Jacob Bixby,  
Joshua Atwood,  
Isaac Chandler,  
John Carlton,



Seth Tomson,  
Asa Parker,  
Benoni Buck,  
Joseph Stanley,  
Thomas Page,  
Isaac Kimball,  
Perley Weld,  
Thomas Weld,  
Nathan Hatch,  
Reuben Parker,  
Wm. Howard,

John Sawyer,  
John Stimson,  
Ebenezer Chandler,  
William Godard,  
John Godard,  
Elias Jones,  
Sam'l Hutchinson,  
Benjamin Clark,  
George Sturtevant,  
Reuben Parker Jr.,  
Noah Bigelow.

The tenets of this society are not set forth in the compact by which these persons became united into a society for religious purposes.

Another religious association was formed Oct, 22, 1798, in accordance with the provisions of the Act approved Oct. 26, 1797. The principles and plan of church government and names of the original members are given as taken from the town records.

Constitution of the Congregation and Moral Society, in the south west part of Reading :

Whereas different sentiments and various opinions prevail in this parish or town with respect to the mode of worship and the support of the Gospel, we therefore whose names are unto subscribed do hereby engage each one for ourselves and with one other to conform to the following regulations and form ourselves into Congregational Society upon the following articles (viz)

1st that the clerk of said society shall warn a meeting in the month of February annually for the purpose of choosing all necessary officers for s<sup>d</sup> society at or by the request of at least five ratable members of s<sup>d</sup> society.

2d that the major of the whole when met shall rule the minor in all civil matters and lest there should be a question arise whether the building of a meeting house for the public worship of God should be called a civil matter we agree that the major shall establish a place for and the mode and manner of building together with all contracts in order to support the preaching of the Gospel by a tax as we may agree from time to time.

3d that no church member shall be controlled in ecclesiastical matters in contrast with the church to which he she or they belong (viz) in the church or settling a minister, in a word, all matters that the church shall judge to belong to them as an ecclesiastical body shall be judged and controlled by s<sup>d</sup> church, except the building the meeting house and making collections for the support of the Gospel.

4th that whenever any member shall be inclined to be dismissed from the society by applying and giving reasons to the society and paying all past obligations with s<sup>d</sup> society, shall be discharged from any further obligation with s<sup>d</sup> church.



5th that if ever it shall so happen that the Church with the rest of said society shall be so disposed, doctrines and modes and measures in the worship of God that s<sup>d</sup> society exclusive of the Church, will not conform to the Church then s<sup>d</sup> society, exclusive of s<sup>d</sup> Church shall set a price on the house that they may build while together, either to give or take.

6th that all meetings for doing business in society shall be legally warned agreeable to the directions of the Laws of this State in town meeting.

7th that whenever the society shall see fit to dissolve this covenant and adopt any other mode for promoting the worship of God, s<sup>d</sup> society being legally warned for the above purpose, the major part by their vote shall have power to dissolve the same.

Reading, Oct. 22, 1798.

|                 |                                         |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------------|
| ELIAS JONES,    | } Society's<br>Prudential<br>Committee. |
| WILLIAM HOWARD, |                                         |
| NOAH BIGELOW,   |                                         |

John Weld,  
William Howard,  
Jason Smith,  
Elias Jones,  
Isaac Kimball,  
Nathan Hatch,  
John Sawyer,  
Noah Bigelow,  
Cornelius Sawyer.  
Ebenezer Robinson,  
Hanannah Barker,  
Samuel Hutchinson,

Ebenezer Chandler,  
Ebenezer Weld,  
Perley Weld,  
Joseph Ackley,  
Thomas Weld,  
Jacob Bixby,  
Benjamin Sawyer,  
Simeon Wetherell,  
Thomas Page,  
James Perry,  
James Bailey.

The log meeting house was used as a place for public religious worship for many years, and the contest between those in favor and those opposed to building a meeting house by a tax on the grand list was not settled and a frame church built until 1801.

There was a great deal of feeling about having the meeting house built at or near the geographical centre of the town, and much contention as to the exact locality of the centre.

The town voted Nov. 27, 1792 to build a meeting house 45x55 "about half way between Osgood's improvement and the crotch of roads that leads" to the log meeting house, and for that purpose voted to raise £100, to be paid in wheat at 5s per bushel, and chose a committee to superintend the building, but nothing was ever accomplished under this vote.

Oct. 22, 1794, the matter again came under consideration, and the town again voted to build—this house to be 60x48 and further \* voted to raise £150 payable in wheat at 4s. per bushel, rye at 3s. 6d, indian corn at 3s. 0d. per bushel or neat cattle equivalent, £50 of which to be paid in by the first day of January 1795, the other £100 to be paid in by the first day of January, 1796." Da-

vid Hapgood, Sam'l Sherwin, Nath'l Pratt, Alpheus Morse and Lt. Thomas Fay were chosen the building committee.

The town voted Jan. 12 1795 to build said house "at the stake set down by the disinterested committee." This committee had been chosen by the town in 1793, and comprised Dr. Fletcher of Cavendish, Capt. Cottle of Woodstock, and Briant Brown Esq. of Windsor (Brownsville.)

Still nothing seems to have been accomplished and the subject again came before the town at a meeting holden at David Burnham's barn Dec. 8, 1796, and being unable to agree, the meeting was adjourned one week to Josiah Kenney's dwelling house, when the vote to build at the "stake set by the disinterested committee" was adopted and a committee shosen to draw up a plan, and to sell the pews.

Still nothing was accomplished.

In 1799 the town voted to build the meeting house "on the nole south of the school house by Esq. Hapgood's" and chose a committee to superintend the building.

This vote was reconsidered in January, 1800, and the town then voted to build near Capt. Burnam's "in the course of next summer." The house was not built until 1801. It was a frame building 45x60, having a porch at each end and stood between D. Burnam's and T. J. Emery's. It had only a rough board floor, no pews, rough seats, a rude pulpit and was innocent of inside finish. This rude temple served for a gathering spot for these early settlers until its destruction by fire on the night of July 4, 1810.

The first Universalist society in Reading was formed at the meeting house May 25, 1802. Jona. Going acting as moderator and John Hulett as clerk. The records of this society have not come to the hands of the editor. The Rev. Samuel C. Loveland was for many years pastor of this society, subsequently known as Restorationists. He resided in "Sherwin Hollow" and at the Centre.

1816. There was no meeting house in town until 1816 when a large and (for those days) elegant brick edifice was erected at the Centre.

Justus Burdick Feb. 28th granted to the town one acre of land (where the ruins of the old church now are) "to be forever kept as a public common for the use of said town," reserving to the proprietors of the Reading meeting house the right to erect a meeting house on said land with necessary sheds—but the grant to become void if a meeting house for public religious worship should not be erected and completed thereon prior to Dec. 9, 1817.

The condition was complied with, and the edifice dedicated to the worship of God under the direction of the Congregationalists.

The Rev. Moses Elliot of Boscawen, N. H., was installed as pastor of the Congregational church Feb. 22, 1819, and continued in that relation for only about two years. He entered Dartmouth College in 1800, and is reputed to have been a vigorous thinker

Puritanical in his manners, tall and commanding in his personal appearance. He published one book of sacred poetry and one singing book.

The Rev. Asahel C. Washburn of Brookfield, Vt., succeeded Mr. Elliott and lived at the Centre. He is remembered as an able, talented speaker, with a fervid zeal in his work, and was instrumental in causing large additions to the church membership. He went to Connecticut.

Rev. Abram Marsh resided at the Centre for a short time and preached at Plymouth "Kingdom" and at Reading Centre.

The pulpit was supplied by Rev. Mr. Converse of Weathersfield and others, and subsequently meetings were kept up by the Christian people, the sermon being read by Dea. Pratt, Dea. W. L. Hawkins and others, until the organization, and Congregationalism in Reading, in any tangible form, became extinct. The records were in the keeping of Dea. W. L. Hawkins and were destroyed at the burning of his hotel.

The Restorationists secured the services of Rev. Samuel C. Loveland, and for many years he was the only resident clergyman in town. He was possessed of vast stores of learning both secular and religious, and had an extensive reputation. While residing here he published a periodical, the "Christian Repository, devoted principally to doctrine, morality and religious intelligence." It was conducted with marked ability and had an extensive circulation. Very many young men were educated by him, and are indebted to him for very much of their subsequent success in life. Among these were Rev. Wm. S. Balch D. D., who became an eminent clergyman, and subsequently preached in Reading, John L. Buck, an eminent lawyer, at Lockport, N. Y., Mason Hulett, subsequently a lawyer at Towanda, Penn., Solomon Kimball, who became a physician, Asa Priest, who became a clergyman, Thos. J. Sawyer D. D. an eminent clergyman now professor in Tufts College, Rev. Otis Skinner who became celebrated as a clergyman and was the author of some religious books that were well received by the Universalists, Adolphus Skinner, who settled at Utica, N. Y., and published a religious newspaper that had an extensive circulation, — Wylls, who became a clergyman, and Hon. Wm. Watkins of Towanda, Penn. a lawyer of great reputation.

The Restorationists or Universalists have kept up an organization to the present time and have the largest number of adherents.

Their resident clergymen have been Rev. Dr. Forester, now of Aurora, Ill., Rev. Geo. W. Bailey, now of Morrisville, Vt., Rev. Joseph Barber and others; and they have enjoyed and profited by the labors of many eminent men, among whom were Rev. Henry Closson, Rev. E. S. Foster and the present incumbent, Rev. Eli Ballou, D. D.

A Calvinistic Baptist church has existed at Felchville for many years. It commenced feeble in numbers and in ability to maintain a clergyman, and for many years depended upon supplies for a



small part of the Sabbaths in the year, Rev. Joseph Freeman, D. D., Rev. Baxter Burrows and others having thus labored with them. A handsome and commodious meeting house was erected by them in 1861 and the Rev. Robert G. Johnson settled as their pastor.

He was succeeded by Rev. C. H. Richardson, Rev. J. S. Small and Rev. Geo. A. Parker, the present incumbent. This church has among its members many persons of fervent piety and exemplary walk. It has been blest with revivals that have added many names to the church rolls. Deacons Abel A. Adams, Samuel R. Kendall and James M. Stearns, who have gone to their eternal reward, will be long remembered for their many virtues and pious benevolence.

The Seventh-day Baptists have a few adherents residing in town, but no church organization so far as known to the editor.

The Spiritualists are quite numerous and maintain at Felchville in the Village Hall public speaking on alternate Sabbaths, and occasionally hold public meetings at the church in South Reading.

#### METHODISM.

The history of the Methodist denomination in Reading prior to 1820, the editor has not been able to authentically state. From 1820 to 23, the Methodist organization comprised 24 members, and the cause was blessed and prospered, so that in 1848 there were 38 members of the class at South Reading and 32 members of the class at Felchville. These organizations have accomplished much good and done much towards refining and purifying the minds of the older citizens as well as of the youth. These influences though gentle and unobtrusive, descending like the dews of heaven unheralded and apparently unheeded, have given a tone and cast to society from which results mighty and important have followed.

John M. Stearns, Esq. writes thus in 1846:

"Though it found its organs neither with the talented or learned, 'it came with power to convert and save the souls of men. Laboring mechanics and humble farmers came round, as self supporting missionaries, and preached their own hearts' experience of redeeming love. In some school house or grove or private dwelling, the people came together and listened, and treasured up the simple words of life, uttered in language broken and inelegant, but plain and sincere from the heart.

"School men and student fops might sneer and doubtless have at these uncouth and rough-cast preachers, and brand them as ignorant ranters, free-willers, Methodists and the Lord knows what: but I envy not these critics the pride of a little learning, nor the hearts that reason jestingly over the means of saving souls. They came, the messengers of Christ, who owned and blessed their labors: for while they preached, 'aged fathers wept over the sins of an ill-spent life,' and mothers sighed and prayed that God would save themselves and their children from the sinner's doom; the prodigal came on his knees and begged for mercy; blooming



"maidens felt that beauty in the grave is food for worms, and sought in Christ the soul's last, only hope. Could I condemn these men for laboring with such meagre gifts, knowing as I do their faithfulness in reproving sin, and that their words have eased the pangs of many a death-bed scene? Their prayers have brought down Heaven's light to many a dying Christian. Who will condemn religion, though its rites may be performed by humble hands, and hearts still humbler in the sight of God? And who will sigh for churches with fluted columns and cloud-capped spires, when man may be religious when he will, and God's great temple still invites to prayer and praise, where no humble citizen has invited in the man of God beneath his lowly roof.

"I was but a child, when, by the highway side, I joined with an elder friend a meeting gathered round a lowly plastered house one Sabbath morning. The preacher stood in front and talked with fervent earnestness of the soul's salvation; he painted sin's dark life, and darker doom, and warned the thoughtless of the wrath to come. He scanned the substance of the Christian's hope, and then invited all to come and drink from Heaven's pure fountains, and join the song of Moses and the Lamb. The sermon ended, and the prayers went up in fervor for mourning souls.

"Then came out from the little cottage men, women and children, in orderly procession, and joined by those without, held their way to the banks of a neighboring creek, where it had been announced that baptism was to be administered. Though no public band was there, their march was to music that thrilled the soul, from its unison with nature and the simple solemnities before us. Many voices united in one of those songs so deeply expressive of religious passion, found in the Methodist Camp Meeting Hymn Book, repeating at intervals the chorus,—

"I'm bound for the kingdom.

"Will you go to glory with me?

"Glory, hallelujah,"

"sentiments which many in that assembly would have uttered, doubtless, had this been the final march of life's last journey. They sung on till the company were all distributed along the banks of the quiet stream: when another brief prayer was said, and several converts were buried beneath the water, in professed imitation of the Saviour's baptism."

The class leaders at South Reading have been David Wetherbee, Jona. Jones, W. H. Dow, John Paddock and Daniel P. Jones; at Felchville, Wm. Felch. The stone meeting house was erected in 1844 and since that time has been occupied about one half of the time by Methodist clergymen. A list of preachers is subjoined, as complete as the editor has been able to make it:

1823, Joel Steele; 1835, J. Beard and E. Jordan, circuit preachers; between '23 and '35, — Randall, Abner D. Merrill, James Fuller, — Fletcher; 1837-8, E. Jordan and A. Button; 1838-9, Chas. Cowing; 1839-40, C. Cowing and J. P. Prouty; 1842-3, A.

K. Howard ; 1843-4, J. Smith, Erasmus B. Morgan ; 1845, P. P. Ray ; 1848, J. A. Sherburne, Harvey Webster ; 1852-3, D. A. Mack ; 18—, Richard Newell ; 1861-3, Wm. A. Bryant ; 1863-4, M. R. Chase ; 1864-5, J. S. Little ; 1865-6, L. C. Dickinson ; 1866-7, Adna Newton ; 1867-70, John L. Smith ; 1870-4, Ira Carter.

The Methodists and Baptists at Felchville used the brick meeting house on alternate Sabbaths until its destruction by fire in 1860, and in 1863 they united with the Universalists in building a neat and tasteful building for public worship on the main street in Felchville, and occupy the house one half of the Sundays.

This denomination at Felchville has become numerically weak by reason of the removal and death of so many of its members and supporters. The denomination is stronger at South Reading, and in both places exercises a salutary influence.

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## CHAPTER V.—WILLIAM ATHORN.

BY J. M. STEARNS, ESQ., OF WILLIAMSBURG. NEW YORK

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As the traveller passes through the town of Reading, he observes at his right hand, while journeying to the east, one of those high ridges of hills, whose forest clad summits and tortuous windings give so much interest to the scenery of the Switzerland of America. Beyond this ridge of about a mile in ascent, there is a rapid descent, through a thick wood, of about half a mile, which brings the Rambler to the head of a deep, wooded glen, that gradually opens into a large swamp.

This swamp has become an object of interest with the whole neighborhood, from its choice blueberries, which are produced nowhere else in the vicinity, and its rare botanical productions ; but chiefly from the story which tradition has associated with a small lawn that opens on an elevated plat of ground near its border. A swamp, that so far surpasses in size, all others near, as to be emphatically denominated the '*great swamp*,' that seems to have sought a quiet retreat in such a wilderness, might well lend its scenery to give interest to romance ; for everything there wears the aspect of nature's unconquered realms. A dismal wildness is reflected on its small open space from the moss clad pines which raise their lofty and drooping boughs far above the buckthorn and alder, that bound its moss field centre. This seems to float on a tide of subterranean waters, as it quivers for many rods around when pressed by the footsteps of a visitor, and finally centers in a pool of water ; that tradition has declared to be bottomless.

The Old Athorn House whose location at the border of the little lawn referred to is still indicated by the pile of stones of which its chimney was constructed, is still regarded as an object of interest.

Tradition tells that William Athorn was a soldier in the revolutionary army, that he had obtained some distinction as a subaltern officer in the army under Arnold in his northern campaign through the wilderness of Maine against Quebec, but that he deserted the American cause and sought a retreat in the town of S—— in the western part of Mass., where where he became acquainted with Fanny Walbridge and their acquaintance ripened into friendship, and into a marriage engagement. The consummation of their connexion was only delayed for such necessary preparation as would render it a blessing of mutual interest to the parties. William heard of an opening for his business in a shop at Salem, about one hundred miles distant. Though it would subject him to a painful separation from his dear Fanny, yet as it promised to increase his means to afford respectable support to a family, it was thought best he should embrace it. Accordingly, after an affectionate leave of the family of Esq. Walbridge, and mutual pledges of confidence between him and Fanny, he set out on his journey, by means of such a public conveyance as the times afforded, to Salem. On arriving there, he quickly obtained an introduction to the situation he was seeking. He was still industrious, and prosperity attended him. A frequent exchange of letters with Fanny Walbridge, full of the affection of youthful hearts, seemed to annihilate the distance between them, and to dissipate the sadness which each realized at their separation. \* \* \* Wm. Athorn had the misfortune at Salem, to fall into the society of a club of young men of doubtful character, who labored to instill into his mind their pernicious sentiments on the subject of morals. They especially jeered him on his attachment to 'a poor country maiden,' telling him of how much more respectable a connexion a gentleman of his cloth might form with some of the wealthy families of the town. There was in Salem, even at that day, something of the blandishments of fashion and parade, and those, it need not be concealed, had already captivated young William. It is believed that while he resided in the neighborhood of Esq. Walbridge, his attachment to Fanny was sincere, but it should be here explained, what appeared in the sequel, that William's habits while he resided on the hills of S——, among its scattered population, resulted rather from the constraint of circumstances, than altogether from settled principles. Though it must be confessed that his character experienced a deterioration during the time he had resided at Salem, from what it seemed to be when he left the country. He however maintained his regular correspondence with Fanny, and though she began to be pained with its indifference, a suspicion of his integrity never entered her mind. When the first twelve months of his absence had passed, it is probable that he still anticipated returning to consummate his marriage. The loose habits of morals which he had contracted at Salem, had led him to think very little of his plighted vows, and the suggestions of his companions would have been complied with, but from the doubtfulness of



the prospects to which they directed him. The bequest of two or three thousand pounds which was left him by the death of a relative put him on a different standing, not only with his own associates, but with the fashionables of the place. It would be thought that after this good fortune he would have hastened to S——, and have sought to perfect the happiness of the kind hearted and lovely girl, who in his poverty had welcomed him to a shelter from the pitiless storm; but instead of this, he began to inquire with his unprincipled companions, if a 'poor country maiden,' would be a suitable companion for a gentleman of his fortune? The reader will not be surprised at this, when he is informed that it began already to be whispered abroad that the morals of Wm. Athorn were questionable. For when moral principle is gone, there is nothing too base for man to do, and ingratitude when it exists in the heart, will as soon manifest itself in respect to the greatest as the least favors. A fashionable young lady of reputed wealthy parents, was pointed out to William, who, as a companion would enable him to shine in the first circles of Salem. To this person his new standing obtained him a ready introduction, and regardless of his former engagements he solicited and obtained the promise of her hand in marriage. She was knowing to his former vows to some young lady in the country, but said she to an intimate friend, "what signifies the feelings of a poor country girl in such a case as this? The laws of human society, and the interests of human happiness require, that those should be of equal rank and wealth who are to be united in the dearest bonds. Fie to the grief, which you say the poor girl will feel. Do you think that one of the standing of Mr. Athorn should degrade himself by fulfilling such a foolish engagement of his mere boyhood? Come, come, dry up your chicken hearted sympathies, they will never do.' Susan Brooks was now to be the bride of Wm. Athorn; and we might imagine how the base William and his paramour moved abroad in the splendor of luxury and fashion, in the glittering show of a rising town, while the lovely Fanny Walbridge, in her country obscurity was forgotten. But when guilt comes to be contracted without consideration, and its pathways are pursued without remorse, we cannot estimate the lengths to which men may be led in crime. Let the reader be surprised and humanity blush! but truth obliges us to state that William in his present elevation had come to look down upon the virtuous friend of the day of his poverty, as a fit subject to be sacrificed at the shrine of his unprincipled enjoyments! The highway robber seldom stops when he has secured the property of the unwary traveler, but consummates his deeds of villainy in murderous blood. The reader may already begin to judge, that a veil of obscurity should be drawn over the point in our story before us, but in this case there is no such necessity. I know it has been frequently quoted as a motto, "frailty, thy name is woman," but the heaven born virtue of Fanny Walbridge was proof against the dark machinations and treacherous baseness of one, to whom she had confided all her



heart, and committed her every earthly hope. Though the shock of the direful conflict sank her to a premature grave, yet she died in virgin purity, with the light of heaven's glory through the promises of the gospel, beaming on her soul. But to come back to my story; William had all the while kept up his correspondence with Fanny, and now in the consummation of his villainy, he writes her of his recent good fortune, and as some old matters of business demanded his attention at S——, tells her that the day was probably near when they might realize all their anticipated happiness in each others society.

It need not be said that the neat white farm house in which Esq. Walbridge now lived, was put by the attentive family in the best possible condition for the reception of the expected visitor.

It was a summer afternoon in August when a chaise drove up to the door, and it was announced to the various members of the family that Mr. Athorn had come. He had altered much in his appearance since he left; but this was rather in favor of gentility of manners and address. But alas, they knew not how much altered was the character of his heart! Fanny in the simplicity of her kind hearted affection, met him at the door and greeted his return as that of her long absent lover. Near two years and a half had he been absent but she had been repeatedly assured that she still lived in his affections. No attention was spared by Esq. Walbridge and his family, that could shew respect to William; and the anticipated visitors of other days might have returned to his heart were it not, that it was callous to all moral sensibility and bent on the blackest purposes.

While Fanny rested secure in her long cherished confidence in William, and welcomed him in his visit, as the hope of her future life,—while she hoped that the great improvement, she had made during his absence, and especially the devoted piety which she began to cultivate, would commend her to his regard, how did her heart sink within her, when she discovered the blasting spirit of dishonor and ruin floating on the whispers of his conversation! What a discovery! He who had pledged his heart so many years before, to identify his happiness with her own, for life, now under the insinuating flatteries of professed affection, seeking her destruction! She had sacrificed every thing of a temporal interest to him, had remained constant in her attachment during all his long absence; and how she might be qualified for the promotion of his happiness, had been the object of her most earnest solicitude and untiring exertions. But now her virtue, that light of all her charms, was demanded, and she was to be left like the seathed myrtle to the withering scorn of the world's just rebuke, and more than this, to the displeasure of her blessed Saviour—was to be left to bear the anguish of her reproach alone, unpitied and forsaken. It was not a lover but a vile wretch that stood before her! While those thoughts hurried rapidly through her mind, she rushed from his presence as from the jaws of a tiger. She had only strength to

throw herself into the arms of her father and beg his protection—  
when she swooned away. \* \* \* \*

The base lover seeing his designs defeated, with deep chagrin skulked away from the house, and it is said that he left the town with so much precipitation, that his tavern bills were sent after him for settlement, to Salem. \* \* \* \*

William kept up appearance of gaiety under his mortification ; for the day of remorse had not yet come with him. He continued his addresses to Miss Brooks, and in three months after his return from the country it was published through the gossip of tea parties that their wedding day was appointed.

The day at length came ; a splendid evening party was invited, and the house of Col. Brooks was illuminated from the garret to the cellar. Susan was arrayed in her splendid bridal robes and the company arrived with William Athorn, all were prepared for the season of festive gaiety. The clergyman at length came and pronounced his benediction on the united pair. But while William was congratulating himself with the conquest he had made, and was counting its trophies of thousands from the estate of the wealthy Col. Brooks, a servant handed him the morning papers. He took them and in giving them a passing glance, the first paragraph that struck his eye was the following :

“Died in S——. Miss Fanny, daughter of H. Walbridge, Esq., aged 22. Beloved in life, she is not forgotten in death, and while the affection of parents wreath the laurel over the headstone of her grave, she is embalmed in the hearts of numerous friends, and received a more enduring crown at the hand of her Blessed Lord. She sought to live but to adorn the virtues of humble piety, and the calm peace which she manifested amid the agonies of death, might well be coveted by the most gay and prosperous worldling. While the sorrows and trials of a wicked world, were too much to be borne by her delicate and virtuous sensibilities, she complained not ; and with a meek, humble, and forgiving spirit, bid them farewell.”

The language of this notice could leave no doubt on William's mind, that Fanny had fallen a victim to his own base treatment, and vile ingratitude. Long he seemed to be without feeling, but this reflection came to his heart. He, however, concealed his agitation, and when the wedding scene was over, he made necessary preparation, for settling in life, and pursued his business without manifesting any apparent interest in this intelligence. But the deep and soul-cutting impressions of that moment could never be banished from his mind, and the wan features of the dying Fanny were the image of his night dreams and the treatment that had procured her death was the subject of his daily reflections.

It was afterwards learned that his impressions on this subject were correct. Though Fanny, in a measure, recovered from the first shock which she experienced, a wasting consumption soon

made her its victim, and William Athorn had the character in the neighborhood which he deserved as the occasion of her death.

When prosperity is sought at the expense of principle, the retributions of justice seldom slumber. One week had scarcely passed after the splendid display at the house of Col. Brooks before his name was recorded among the bankrupts of the town, and the dreams of William Athorn all vanished in disappointment. He soon found that fashion and show could not be supported without an expense of property, and by his inventories he learned that the principal of his own estate was diminishing daily. Withal, his own intemperance and other vices soon deranged his affairs, and five years had not passed before William and his wife were reduced to the extremes of poverty. Susan had been very little accustomed to the trials of the situation to which she was now reduced, and it need not be surprising that she became so peevish in her habits, and sour in her temper, as to banish every shadow of comfort from her presence. Besides domestic trials, William's present circumstances were a fit occasion to harrow up the deep remorse which for five years had preyed on his guilty soul. Under keen reflections of his guilt, disgrace and ruin, he left his home to return thither no more.

To hide himself from his bitter anguish and shame, was what constrained him to wander through the country as a miserable vagabond, and finally to do penance in the wilds of Vermont, by suffering in the solitary hermitage, whose site by the borders of the dismal swamp I have already referred to. I need trouble the reader with but few observations further. The retributions of providence for violated honor, have been sufficiently illustrated in what we have related. Suffice it to say, that for ten years he lived, the wreck of manhood, a half reasoning and half maniac being, the hermit of this lone retreat.

He was occasionally seen in his rambles abroad in search of food; but as the people knew little of his history, they did not trouble themselves about the exercises of his heart. The most that is known concerning his death is, that his body was found in his hut, after he had been about ten years resident there, and was interred in a corner of the burying ground. But the location is nearly lost, and no one cares to preserve its remembrance. He died alone, without the care or comfort of friends, but there is still in being an old manuscript book, said to have been found in his hut after his decease. It is filled with broken and incoherent sentences, which are scarcely able to be deciphered. Sufficient, however, can be made out, to show that it was a sort of diary, in which is recorded broken sketches of his reflections. Towards its conclusion there is written out more plain and full, this significant paragraph.

Murder! yes,—this is thy crime! ingratitude the instrument; and innocence the victim. These hands are stained, this soul is black with guilt's pollution! O that I could but die and oblivion



shade might cover me. But now my death scene has come, and I am here alone, to settle this dread account with God. Blessed loneliness, thou dost hide me distressed with these agonies, from the scorn of reproaching man, and none shall have to tell of the hell-lit anguish, which consumes the life cords of the dying murderer of Fanny Walbridge.

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## CHAPTER VI.

### PHYSICIANS AND ATTORNEYS—DR. ELKANNAH DAY.

Dr. Day was the first resident Physician in Reading, and came prior to 1790, from Westminster, in Windham County. He was suddenly killed by being thrown from his horse. While a resident of Windham County, he was a very prominent and active man, both as a politician and physician. He was one of the physicians who treated the wounded at the time of the Westminster massacre March 13, 1775, when was shed the first blood of the Revolution. He was for a time a supporter of the jurisdiction claimed by New York over the territory now constituting the State of Vermont, and Aug. 18, 1778, was commissioned Major in Col. E. Patterson's regiment. He was one of the representatives of Cumberland County in the New York Provincial Assembly, commencing Aug. 18, 1779, but was in attendance for only a few days,—and was a member of the N. Y. Senate in 1781. He opposed the formation of a separate state government for Vermont, and with twenty-nine others, was arrested and brought before the Superior Court for the State of Vermont, holden at Westminster, May 26, 1779, charged with riotous and unlawful conduct in resisting the authority of the State of Vermont. Stephen Row Bradley, Esq. defended him, while Noah Smith, Esq. conducted the prosecution. Ethan Allen was at Westminster with a body of soldiers, aiding the sheriff in holding and guarding the prisoners, some of whom obtained their discharge on some technical motion made by Bradley. Hearing of this, Allen, accoutred in his military dress, with a large cocked hat on his head profusely ornamented with gold lace, and an immense sword swinging by his side, hastily entered the Court room, advanced to the bench, and commenced a furious harangue, addressed to the Court; but aimed principally at Mr. Bradley and the prosecuting attorney.

The presiding Judge, Moses Robinson, of Bennington, informed Allen that he could listen to his remarks as a private citizen, but could not allow him to address them either in military attire, or as a military man. To this Allen replied by a nod, and taking off his chapeau threw it on the table. He laid aside his sword with a flourish, turned to the Court and in dramatic tone exclaimed,

"For forms of government let fools contest:  
What e'er is best administered is best."



He then turned to the audience and having surveyed them for a moment, again addressed the Court as follows:

"Fifty miles I have come through the woods with my brave men to support the civil with the military arm; to quell any disturbances should they arise; and to aid the sheriff and the court in prosecuting these Yorkers, the enemies of our noble State. I see, however, that some of them, by the quirks of this artful lawyer, Bradley, are escaping from the punishment they so richly deserve, and I find, also, that this little Noah Smith is far from understanding his business, since he at one moment moves for a prosecution and in the next wishes to withdraw it. Let me warn your Honor to be on your guard lest these delinquents should slip through your fingers, and thus escape the rewards so justly due their crimes."

Having delivered his speech, he with great dignity replaced his chapeau, buckled on his sword and left the court room. Dr. Day pleaded not guilty and a trial was had before the judges who pronounced him guilty and fined him £40 and one thirtieth of the costs which amounted in all to £1,477, 18s.

Dr. Day survived this misfortune, and became a prominent and active citizen of the new State. He was appointed sheriff of Cumberland county (comprising the present counties of Windham and Windsor) Oct. 16, 1782, and at the session of the superior court holden at Marlboro, Feb. 4, 1783, arrested and imprisoned Timothy Phelps for assuming to act as sheriff of Cumberland county, under a commission from the State of New York. He held the position of sheriff until 1787. Dr. Day was town clerk of Reading in 1791 and 1792, and the representative of the town in the General Assembly in 1790 and 1791. He resided in Reading between Amasa Watkins' and J. A. Bixby's.

He was possessed of a ready wit and was agreeable and popular in his manners. It is related of him that upon being inquired of by an old lady to know if taking snuff would hurt her brains, he replied in the negative, adding, "*for no one who has any brains takes snuff.*"

Dr. Woodbury Marcy, the second physician, came about 1795. His residence was near Edgar Stearns'. He left town soon after the burning of the meeting house, July 4, 1810.

The third physician was Silas Bowen, M. D. son of Dea. Henry Bowen of Woodstock, Conn. He was born there Sept. 6, 1774, and studied his profession with Dr. Ballantyne of Schodack, N. Y., and came to Reading and commenced practice in 1799, residing near James A. Bixby's. He was afterwards one of the founders of the Medical Society of the State of Vermont, and was eminent in his profession. Dr. Wm. B. Wetherbee read medicine under his direction at Reading. In 1822, Dr. Bowen removed to Clarendon, Vt., where he resided until his death, which took place at Kearney City, Nebraska, while on a visit to his children, Sept. 26, 1857. He was the father of eight children. His son, Dr. Mar-

cellus Bowen, born at Reading, graduated at Hanover, N. H. Medical College and practiced at South Boston, Mass. Dr. Josiah K. Skinner and Dr. — Meade succeeded Dr. Bowen for a short time, but no definite information has been learned of them.

Dr. Joseph Whiting settled at the Center about 1810. He was born at Westford, Mass. He removed to West Windsor where he died about 1847, at the place now occupied by John Nichols.

Dr. James Wardner and Dr. — Smith practiced at South Reading; the former removed to Plainfield, N. H. the latter died in town.

In 1831, Dr. W. G. Emery and Dr. Isaac Minard were rival practitioners in Reading, and quite a rivalry was going on between their respective friends. The anti-masonic excitement was then at fever heat, and Reading and South Woodstock were the hot beds. Elder Loveland, the great anti-masonic expositor, wielded his fruitful pen and fanned the flames to welding heat. Emery was a Mason, Minard, anti. No man could hold office or patronage during this reign of terror, if he was known to be a Mason. During this excited state of the public mind, Dr. Nathaniel Tolles appeared upon the scene and purchasing the good will of Dr. Emery, commenced the practice of his profession. Little did the people think when they were enfolding him in their embrace that they were receiving a member of the hated institution, but such was the fact. He was then a member of the Blue Lodge, Chapter and Council. He dealt with his patrons rather gingerly, informing them, when interrogated, that he came to practice medicine, not to mingle in political excitement. Dr. T. subsequently purchased the good will of Dr. Minard and the coast was clear. He had a very extensive and highly successful practice in Reading and adjoining towns from his arrival in Sept. 1831, until his removal to Claremont, N. H. March 20, 1841.

Dr. Tolles, the son of John Tolles, was born in Weathersfield, Vt. Sept. 17, 1805, fitted for College at Claremont Catholic Seminary, a flourishing institution at that time located in the western part of Claremont, N. H. He did not enter College but commenced the study of medicine and surgery with Dr. James Hall of Windsor, Vt., where he remained parts of two years, and then continued the study with Dr. Charles G. Adams, of Keene, N. H. and graduated at Dartmouth Medical College in November, 1830. He then became resident physician in South Boston Alms House, where he remained six months and then established himself in practice in Reading. While residing at Reading, he was one of the founders and trustees of Ludlow Academy. He is still engaged in the active practice of his profession at Claremont, N. H. He has been a presidential elector, served three years as chairman of the board of county commissioners, was one of the projectors and committee of the high school building at Claremont, is one of the trustees of the Stevens' school fund, and has held numerous other positions of honor and responsibility.

Dr. L. Foster in 1841 succeeded to the practice of Dr. Tolles at the Centre.

Dr. Levi Aldrich practiced at the Centre until his death there May, 1, 1853.

Succeeding him have been Dr. Chester L. Stewart, Dr. Wm. L. Paige and Dr. — Marshall, Dr. O. W. Sherwin, now of Woodstock, practiced at Hammondsville for several years, with reputation and success.

Dr. Levi Putnam was the first physician who settled at Felchville, having located there in June, 1832, and built the house now occupied by his widow. He was born in Middlesex, Vt., March 16, 1805, but spent the larger part of his early life at Charlestown, N. H. where he studied medicine and surgery with Dr. Thomas Barrow. He graduated at Dartmouth Medical College in 1830, and after practicing his profession for a short time with Dr. Alpheus Fletcher at Cavendish, Vt. located at Felchville. He married Philetta Wentworth, Dec. 24, 1834, and died August 7, 1845, leaving surviving him a daughter, Lydia A., and a son, A. Wentworth Putnam.

Dr. Marcus Swain, a native of Reading, entered upon the practice of medicine at Felchville, in January, 1845. He remained about one year and was succeeded by Dr. George Guernsey, whose stay was limited to less than one year, having sold his good will to Ripley Clark, M. D. whose professional residence at Felchville continued from November, 1846, to the autumn of 1856.

The practitioners since have been Dr. — Morse, Dr. James P. Osborne, now of Tilton, N. H., Dr. Walter S. Robinson, [see cut] Dr. A. L. Morgan and Dr. Harvey M. Guild.

#### ATTORNEYS.

Titus Brown, Esq. was the first practicing attorney residing in Reading. His residence and office were northerly of D. E. Burnham's. His pocket was as "empty as a lawyer's pocket" and he was "warned out" within one year of his arrival, in accordance with the law and practice of those days. He remained but about one year, and removed to New Hampshire, where he became successful and a member of Congress.

One — Crocker next, hung out his shingle, but remained only a short time, and nothing can be learned of him. Wm. Watkins succeeded him. He was a "native," read law with Hon. R. Washburn, at Cavendish, Vt. and with Hon. Wm. Upham, U. S. Senator at Montpelier, Vt. and was admitted to the bar at Montpelier, in September, 1825. His first attempts at practice were in Reading, having his office at the Centre for about three years. He left Reading with a fortune of one hundred dollars and four cents, in September, 1828, and went to Towanda, Penn. where he has since resided and been extensively engaged in the practice of the law, acquiring thereby fortune and fame. No practicing attorney has



resided at the Centre since 1828. Judge Uriel C. Hatch opened an office in Felchville in 18—, where he continued in practice until his failing health prevented. He had been probate judge and was regarded as a safe counselor. His legal writings are models of neatness and perspicuity.

Josiah Q. Hawkins, Esq. succeeded Mr. Hatch. He was a "native" and the son of Wm. L. Hawkins. He received an academic education, studied law with O. Hutchinson, Esq. and L. Adams, Esq. at Chester, Vt. and was admitted to the bar at Woodstock, Vt. He commenced practice in Felchville about 1847, and continued in practice there until the fall of 1860, when he removed to Brandon, Vt. where he has since resided and practiced his profession.

The editor of this publication has had his office at Felchville since early in March, 1860. He fitted for College at Chester, (Vt.) Academy, taught school in Warren and Hunterdon counties in New Jersey and in Vermont and New Hampshire, read law with Jehial G. Shipman, Esq. an eminent attorney and counselor at law, of Belvidere, N. J. with Judge William Rounds at Chester, Vt. and with Messrs. Washburn & Marsh at Woodstock, Vt. He was admitted to practice at Windsor County Court, May Term, 1859.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### FELCHVILLE AND ITS FOUNDER, WILLIAM FELCH.

This village is in the southeast part of the town, on a branch of Black River. At the settlement of the town the land where the village now stands was low and moist and not considered of much value, and so late as 1831 could boast of only five houses. The advent of William Felch in 1826 seems to have given it the first impulse of growth and importance, and the village bears his name. Few men have spent a more active life or pursued callings so varied in their characteristics.

Born at Royalton, Mass. Feb. 3, 1797, he came to Windsor, Vt. at the age of 14, where he remained four years and with his father in Cavendish three years, working on a farm. A short sojourn in Ohio, in the winter of 1818, abated his western fever, and induced him to set his face toward the rising sun and he migrated to New York city, and there found employment in regulating streets and lots. Married, at Cavendish, Vt. Oct. 28, 1831, to Bethiah Peck, he immediately moved to New York city and resided there four and one half years, engaged in paving streets, flagging sidewalks, and working a flagging-quarry at King's bridge or Yonkers, kept a grocery store and built three dwelling houses. He came to reside in Reading in the spring of 1826, and with O. P. Clark built and filled the first store in Felchville, and in 1827 built and kept the first tavern and also built the first factory building there in 1835.



In 1830, with H. Cutting, he carried the first mail from Woodstock, Vt. through Felchville to Charlestown, N. H. He has built in Felchville eleven dwelling houses with their out-buildings, and is building one now; also built one dwelling house in Nebraska, where his youngest daughters now live.

In 1832 and '33 he represented the town of Reading in the State Legislature. He has acted as justice of the peace about forty years, and is now acting in that office; has been selectman five years, lister twelve years, and held many other town offices. He has been postmaster, a country merchant at three different times, carried on blacksmithing, lime and potash making, and with others run the satinette factory in Felchville. He built and ran a saw mill, acted as drover, and farmed it more or less. He built the house in which he now resides, in 1853.

For the past forty years he has been one of the most enterprising men in the town. His name has been identified with almost every public act, and probably no one has exerted a greater or better influence. His position at times may have been assailed, yet all have been willing to give him credit for strict integrity and honest motives. Few men have enjoyed the confidence of the public to a greater extent than has William Felch.

In October, 1871, he celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of his marriage by a golden wedding at his house, in which his neighbors, friends and townsmen generally participated. Many beautiful presents were made, among them a fine gold-headed cane, bearing this inscription: "William Felch, Oct. 28th, 1871." The presentation was made by Gilbert A. Davis, and was most feelingly accepted by the recipient. It was an occasion that few live to celebrate and was enjoyed by all present.

Felchville school district was organized by Abel Gilson, Jr. and Rufus Forbush, Jr. selectmen, April 5, 1827, at the dwelling house of William Felch. William Felch was the first clerk and treasurer, Joseph Fairbanks, moderator and collector, James C. Esty, William Wilkins and Roland Fletcher, prudential committee. The district by vote, adopted the name of Willshire and it bore that designation until 1844, when it became No. 10. On its organization, it comprised the lands of Joseph Fairbanks, William Felch, James C. Esty, William Kile, Blackman Cook, Charles Dudley, Silas Bowen, David Young, Oliver Tarble, Daniel Isham, Ezekiel Davis and Roland Fletcher.

The first winter school was taught in 1827-28 by Miss Philetta Wentworth, in a room fitted up for that purpose in the hotel, then in process of erection. She had eight pupils, and \$1.50 per week, and boarded round.

In the summer of 1828, a school house 24x20 was built, where L. G. Coolidge's house now stands and Miss Wentworth taught the first school in that house the next winter, having the same wages and twenty pupils.

The school house now standing was built in 1847. William Felch, E. W. Watkins and Martin Pratt being the committee to superintend the construction.

Felchville has slowly increased in size and business importance, and it now bears the impress of thrift and care. Few villages excel it in neatness. The manufacture of satinets was for a time carried on, and subsequently that of "shoddy" cassimeres and doeskins—"all wool"—in the modern commercial sense of that term—that is in fact *all wool* except what was cotton. The first attempts at manufacturing proved not to be very profitable and William Felch became so much mixed up in the business with Mr. — Tracy, that nearly twenty years were occupied by the Court of Chancery to bring order out of confusion and judicially determine that Mr. Tracy owed Esq. Felch nearly \$3000.

The first factory building was a low straggling structure that *dissolved in smoke* in 185—. This proved a stunning blow to the business interests of the village, as the inhabitants judged, and accordingly funds to the amount of nearly \$2500 were raised by subscription and donated to a certain individual to induce him to re-build. Poor people contributed, and perhaps the "widow's mite" was cast in to swell the rich man's coffers, under the full belief that indirectly the donor would be benefitted. In 1859 a second building was erected and the hum and clatter of machinery again heard.

This edifice "went up" one Sunday evening in April, 1860,—a case of "spontaneous combustion." The property was well insured in sound and reliable insurance companies and the "loss" promptly settled.

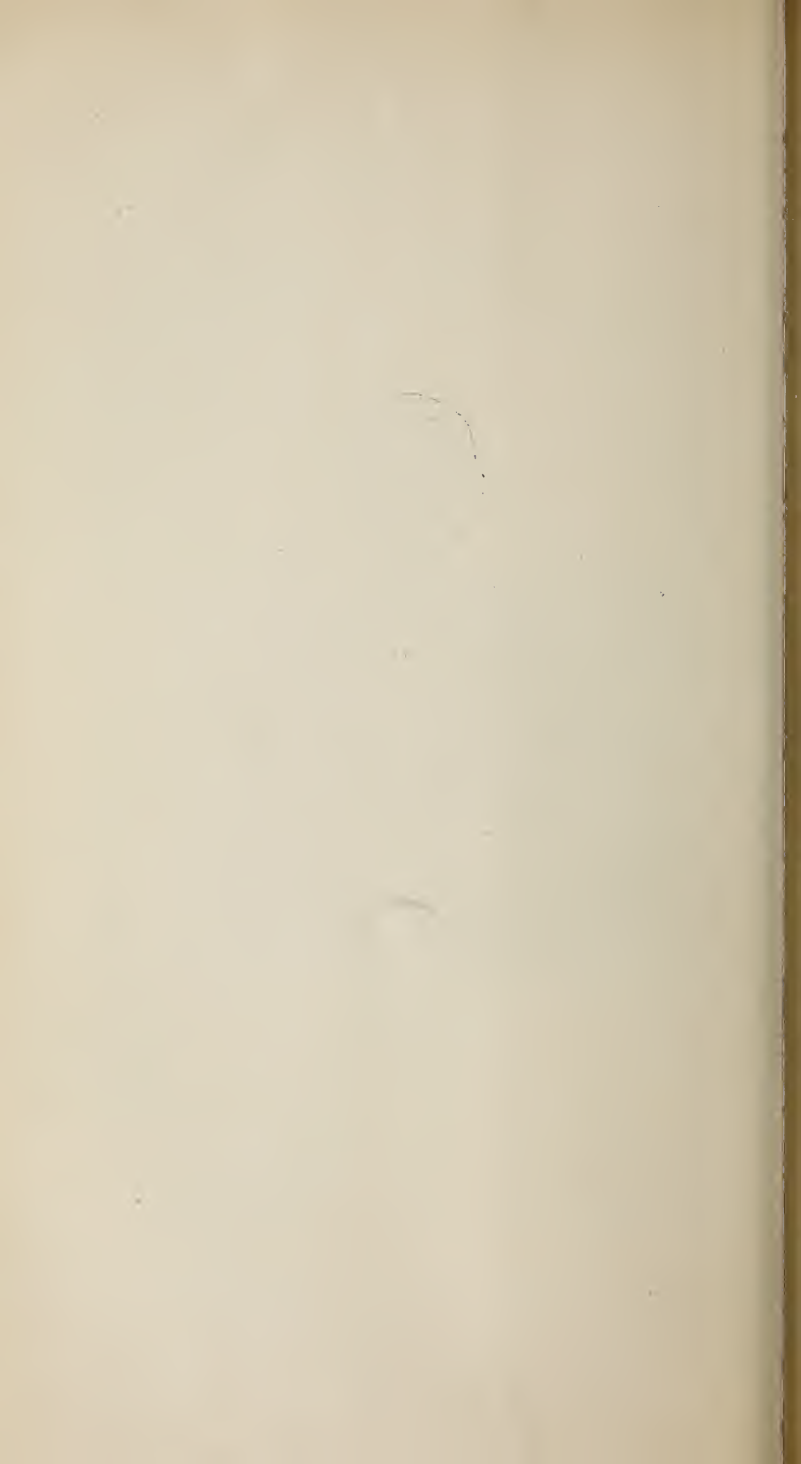
Again the citizens of the village, young, old, married and widowed, contributed to the fund of nearly \$1500, to induce the rebuilding of the factory. The insurance money and the donations reared a "two-set" structure and there was a hum and stir again in Felchville. The proprietor obtained a contract in 1861 to supply the cloth for the uniforms for the 2d and 3d Regts. of Vt. Vols.,—those regiments, as it will be remembered, being first uniformed in gray. This gray cloth, being in part cotton, when wet had an unfortunate habit of shrinking, and did shrink until the protruding hands and feet of the Vermont soldiers in Virginia, the next fall and winter, and the coats short in the waist, narrow in the back and scantily meeting in front, rendered the Green Mountain Boys veritable "Brother Jonathans" in their personal appearance, and their insufficient protection from the inclemency of a Virginia winter sent many a gallant boy to the hospital and to a premature grave.

The manufactory of this cloth at Felchville was even run on Sunday to make this cloth, under the contract with the Governor. Its use was soon abandoned and the army blue substituted.

This third factory building also *dissolved in smoke* in 1868,—another case of "spontaneous combustion," being well insured. Its



WILLIAM FELCH.





destruction did not ruin its owners. These two amounts contributed by the citizens for the building up of the manufacturing interests of the place, have not been, since 186— used in any way as the donors contemplated, but have been carried out of town and diverted to other purposes.

The manufacture of bedsteads has been carried on in the village by P. W. Stearns, Charles D. Brink, D. S. White, H. and M. A. Stowell, F. G. Rice, Clark Wardner and others.

The Felchvillh Chair Company occupy the site of the woollen factories.

The other business interests of the village are duly attended to, and comprise the usual variety of stores, shops, hotels, medical, clerical and legal practitioners.

The village at one time attained an unenviable notoriety as the rendezvous of the Larneds, in their day noted criminals and bank robbers. The older residents of the village will readily recall to mind these men, their associates and exploits. The Larneds robbed the bank at Charlestown, N. H., the Battenkill bank at Manchester, Vt. and the Cooperstown bank at Cooperstown, New York. Abijah Larnerd was convicted of the robbery of the Cooperstown bank, sentenced to a term of imprisonment in Sing Sing prison, and died while serving out the term of his sentence. He was previously arrested for being concerned in the robbery of the Battenkill bank and after a preliminary hearing was committed to jail and duly indicted for that crime, but the proof of his complicity in the Cooperstown bank robbery being more complete, he was tried for the latter offense and convicted.

The horse and wagon that Larned had with him at the Manchester robbery were traced to Felchville. The wagon was burned up the gulf west of the factory and the horse turned out into a pasture on the west side of Mt. Moses.

As showing how strangely facts come to the knowledge of detectives, a letter is subjoined that gave the clue to the Manchester Bank robbers and their confederates. Two letters were written at Felchville—one was an order for some property addressed to the manufacturer near Oxford, Mass., the other was the subjoined letter; by mistake the letters were put into the wrong envelopes—the order for property sent to Abijah Larned, and the other sent to the Oxford manufacturer. The Oxford man was honest and gave the letter received by him to the public; the other letter was found in Abijah Larned's custody after his arrest.

Having both letters in his possession, Major Hawley, then President of Battenkill Bank, and Elias G. Burton, the Attorney of the Bank came to Felchville on the 17th day of June, 1851, found the horse, and, also, found where Abijah Larned had let a man have \$2000, in money soon after the robbery, taking a note running to his cousin *as was said*, and found the man then residing at Felchville who acknowledged that he wrote the subjoined letter and that it was intended for Abijah Larned,—the name of the

party addressed and the signature both being fictitious, and both intended as a blind.

The letter had no date, but has internal evidence that it was written subsequent to the robbery of the Bank at *M.* (Manchester) which robbery was perpetrated in the autumn of 1850 and the Cooperstown Bank robbery on the night of Dec. 30, 1850.

The following is a copy of said letter :

MR. DRESSER : When I returned I learned something that leads me to think I had better not leave here and go west at present, the western men have been here and also from *M.* and want very much to see the men that were through this vicinity last fall buying sheep. I think if I should go I should be looked after too smart in my absence. Some gents called on my boy and wanted a fast horse ; they saw two and wanted to know if I had not another. I say I think all hands had better lay still at present. I can tell you more as soon as I can see the man who swam the river. He is out west now, but for what purpose I know not. His wife says to take a farm. He leaves where he is now in the spring. You may think that I do not want to go west, but it is not so. If I can sell I had as soon go there as stay here. But when I can see you and tell you all, I know you will say I do as I ought, but if you think otherwise when you get this I will go, let the consequences be what they may. I think I know all I can learn there. When I go to your place again, I shall take the night train to Clappville. When you write do not mail your letter at your office. When I see you I will tell you more. I think you will understand by this you must be quiet at present.

Yours, S. M. WEEKS.

P. S. Send me some large paper. I shall not try to do the first with this here. I shall go and see you as soon as I dare to, no until the last of next week, or the first of week after.

These are affairs of the past. Felchville has "lived down" the unpleasant notoriety and earned since a good and enviable reputation for the sobriety and morality of its inhabitants, and for their general thrift, industry and intelligence. The Reading Library Association have gathered a well selected miscellaneous library of over 400 volumes, and the influence of this Association has been of a highly beneficial character.

Geo. M. Clark and E. P. Hardy have contributed the largest sums of any two individuals towards making additions to the number of volumes ; and "Hank" White and O. S. Holden are entitled to commendation for their efforts in the same cause.

Mr. Geo. M. Clark of the Whitmore & Clark Minstrel troupe has taken his benefit at Felchville, and given the entire proceeds of the Concert to the Library Association.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## MILITARY AFFAIRS AND REBELLION RECORD.

There were but few settlers in Reading prior to the close of the Revolutionary war. Yet the throes of that conflict were felt within its limits and at a town meeting holden on the fourth day of April 1782, the town "voted to hire a man to serve in the war eight months," and elected "Thomas Hapgood and Nedeiah Cady committee to assist the selectmen in hiring the above man." It is not known what man went into the service under this call.

However, many of the soldiers discharged from the patriotic army became respected and valuable citizens of the town, and the following is thought to be a complete list of these venerable men:

Jeduthem Wyman, James Hall, William Rist, Cornelius Sawyer, Elijah Williams, Daniel Wetherbee, Timothy Fullam, Josiah Harris, Eben'r. Robinson, Nathan Hatch, James Robinson, Gideon Kirtland, Moses Chaplin, — Nutting, Searg't Abiah Rice, Geo. Clark, Capt. William A. Hawkins, Thomas Nichols, Abel Amnden, Benj. Hathorn, Jeremiah Johnson, Amos Wetherbee, Oliver Davis, — Darling, Lt. — White, Benj. Sawyer, Solomon Keyes.

1794. The payment of town bounties to soldiers seems not to be a modern invention for kindling patriotic zeal. Though the Revolution had resulted triumphantly for the American arms, and the independence of the United States acknowledged, the relations between the two governments was far from amiable, and in 1794, a war between the United States and England was a probable event. Jay's treaty, however, solved the problem of difficulties. The people of Reading zealously espoused the national cause, and in a town meeting holden Aug. 4, 1794, voted that in case the state should not the town would make up the stated monthly pay of the soldiers called for from Reading to forty shillings per month, and to give "£1 10s. to each man as a bounty," and further "voted that the Serg't that is called for receive £2 8s. and music and Corp'l £2 4s."

1798. The troubles with France assumed a warlike aspect, an extra session of Congress was called and defensive measures adopted.

Hostilities at sea were commenced, and the good people of Reading in town meeting assembled April 16, 1798, "voted to make up the soldier's wages eight dollars per month from the time they march until they are dismissed. Voted to give to each soldier four dollars of the above addition at the time they are called upon to march."

A treaty of peace made with Napoleon Bonaparte who had overthrown the Directory and become First Consul of France, caused a cessation of hostilities, and the Reading soldiers remained at home.

1809. The exercise by the British of the "right of search" by an attack upon the American frigate, Chesapeake, off the cape of



Virginia, by the British frigate, Leopard, and the forcible search of the vessel and seizure of four of her crew and their transfer to the Leopard, aroused the people of the United States, and the President in preparation for war, called for one hundred thousand troops. The citizens of Reading responded with their usual ardor, and in town meeting, January 14, 1809, "Voted to augment the wages of those twelve men who are called for, if called into actual service, to eight dollars per month with the sum drawn from Government and to receive five dollars each of said wages as advance, if called for."

### WAR OF 1812.

1812. The town refused to vote a bounty to volunteers or drafted men for the war of 1812.

At this time there were two militia companies in Reading—the west company commanded by Capt. Aaron Townsend and the east company commanded by Capt. Noah Cady. Fourteen soldiers were required from Reading, to serve six months, and according to orders Capt. Townsend drafted from his company seven. The draft was made in 1812, at Buck's tavern, (where S. Coburn now resides), and Elijah Chandler, Samuel Dudley, Robert Dunlap, Josiah Gilson, Willard Holden, Joshua Sawyer and Silas Wetherbee were drafted. The draft from the east company was made at Brigham's tavern at the Centre, and the men drafted were Asa Belden, Rufus Forbush, John Grandey, Benjamin Grandey, Amos Lane, Kendall Boutwell, Abel Gilson. These men all served in Capt. Asa Briggs' company, in the 31st Regiment, commanded by Col. Daniel W. Dana, their term of service commencing in 1812, Sept. 9. They served at Plattsburg and on the Canadian frontier, at \$5 per month. Other citizens of Reading served in the same war, among whom were David Burnham, Henry Giddings, Abial Persons, Elisha Sawyer, Samuel Johnson, John York Sawyer, Joseph Wood, Benjamin R. Nutting, John Haggett.

John York Sawyer was a recruiting officer and subsequently 1st lieutenant in Col. Dana's regiment.

Josiah Gilson was orderly sergeant in Capt. Briggs' company. Wm. Robinson served in 1812, three months, in Captain Daniel Phelps' company, Col. Williams' regiment of militia, and was honorably discharged. He enlisted March 2, 1813, for five years, in Capt. Melvin's 1st Regiment Light Artillery, Col. Towsan and served until his honorable discharge at Ft. Willicut, Newport, R. I., March 2, 1818. Silas A. Robinson, a blacksmith, and Calvin Robinson, the postmaster at South Reading, are his sons.

### WAR OF 1861.

The several quotas assigned to the town under the successive calls for soldiers to aid in the suppression of the Southern Rebellion, were all promptly filled by volunteers, except the order for the draft of 1863, under which there was no opportunity for volun-



teering. The town paid liberal bounties and in that respect was governed by generous and just principles, so that no soldier was ever obliged to institute a suit to collect his bounty from Reading. The town was victimized to some extent by erroneous accounts rendered for disbursements to volunteers for bounties, the amount reported as paid having been much larger than the amount actually paid the soldiers. It will be remembered that at one time, after an exposure, a certain amount was disgorged and refunded to the town. The town, also, suffered by the enlistment of "bounty jumpers" at extravagant bounties, who on paper applied upon the quota but were of no advantage to the government; the summary of their enlistment being, that enlistment papers were signed, receipts for the bounty signed, (the broker and the recruit dividing on terms known to them) and the recruit deserted at the first opportunity, and most generally before he reached the seat of war, or faced any danger greater than that of the explosion of the camp-kettle. For this class of men the town claims no merit. But in the military record of those citizens of the town, and of those not citizens, who honestly enlisted and served upon her quotas, the town feels an honest pride. There is given below a complete military history of each man who served during the war upon the quota of Reading. This record can not fail to prove of permanent interest to the soldiers and their friends.

The selectmen were recruiting officers, and through them, the soldiers were generally enlisted. Under the act of March 3, 1860, chapter 75, "for enrolling and calling out the national forces," Gilbert A. Davis was the enrolling officer in Reading, and made the enrollment upon which the draft of 1863 was made. A list of the drafted men is subjoined, showing who entered service, furnished substitutes or paid commutation. The business of enlisting men was subsequently placed by the laws of the United States under the direction of a provost marshal for each congressional district, and the selectmen acted under the state laws in aid of the provost marshal and to carry forward the patriotic purpose of filling the quotas of the town. The pressing calls for soldiers developed a class of men, termed "substitute brokers," with all the iniquities well known to have been connected with their operations.

About sixty enlisted men, volunteers for nine months' service, assembled at Felchville, under orders from Adjutant General Washburn, and were formed into Co. H of the 16th Vt. Vols. on the 18th day of September, 1862. The organization was effected in the basement of the Baptist Church, Brigadier General Jackson presiding, and J. C. Sawyer elected captain, Elmer D. Keyes, 1st Lieutenant, and John O. Sanborn, 2d Lieutenant. George O. Hawkins and W. W. Keyes were sergeants of this company, and Elmer D. Keyes became the captain on Dec. 31, 1862.

## REBELLION RECORD OF READING.

| Names.             | Age | Date of Enlistment. | Date of Muster. | Co. | Reg't.       | Remarks.                                                                   |
|--------------------|-----|---------------------|-----------------|-----|--------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Amsden, Wm. E.     | 18  | Mar. 18, '62        | April 12, '62   | C   | 6            | Missing since battle of Wilderness.                                        |
| Amsden, Alzamon D. | 43  | Nov. 14, '63        | April 17, '64   | H   | 17           | Died Jan'y 17, 1865.                                                       |
| Bailey, James      | 30  | Aug. 7, '63         | Aug. 7, '63     | A   | 2            | Died at Andersonville, July 11, 1864.                                      |
| Bixby, Martin J.   | 20  | Aug. 15, '62        | Sept. 30, '62   | C   | 4            | Pro. Com. Ser. May 18, 1865, Mustered out, June 19, 1865.                  |
| Bowers, Alphonzo   | 24  | Aug. 25, '62        | Sept. 30, '62   | A   | 3            | Died Dec. 23, 1862.                                                        |
| Bryant, Oscar B.   | 19  | Jan'y 14, '62       | Feb. 12, '62    | D   | 7            | Re. En. Feb. 17, '64, Pro. Corp. June 15, '64, Mustered out Mar. 14, 1866. |
| Butler, Andrew J.  | 25  | Aug. 14, '61        | Oct. 15, '61    | H   | 6            | Discharged Jan'y 15, 1863.                                                 |
| Bryant, Henry N.   | 24  | Aug. 19, '62        | Oct. 4, '62     | A   | 12           | Mustered out July 14, '63.                                                 |
| Buck, Ambrose D.   | 19  | Aug. "              | "               | A   | 12           | " " " "                                                                    |
| Buck, Elton F.     | 21  | Aug. 23, '62        | "               | A   | 12           | " " " "                                                                    |
| Brown, Geo. E.     | 18  | Dec. 19, '63        | Jan'y 2, '64    | H   | 2d U. S.S.S. | Died at the Military Prison, Florence, S. C., about Dec. 1, 1864.          |
| Brown, Geo. T.     | 21  | "                   | "               | H   | "            | Died June 5, 1864.                                                         |
| Brown, James A.    | 18  | Mar. 22, '64        | Apr. 12, '62    | G   | 17           | Died May 25, 1865.                                                         |
| Bundy, Geo. G.     | 32  | Dec. 31, '63        | Jan'y 2, '64    | I   | Cav.         | Mustered out May 22, 1865.                                                 |
| Butler, Oliver B.  | 31  | Dec. 19, '63        | Dec. 31, '64    | H   | 6            | Mustered out June 26, 1865.                                                |
| Butler, Andrew J.  |     | "                   | "               | H   | 6            | Mustered out June 26, 1865.                                                |
| Coburn, Ansel O.   | 21  | Aug. 16, '61        | Sept. 20, '61   | C   | 4            | Corp., Dis. May 14, '62.                                                   |
| Coburn, Frank J.   | 18  | Aug. 15, '62        | Sept. 30, '62   | C   | 4            | Died April 18, 1863.                                                       |
| Crosby, John       | 19  | Aug. 12, '62        | Sept. "         | I   | 2            | Dis. Dec. 27, 1864.                                                        |
| Cassavant, Joseph, | 18  | June 8, '64         | July 6, '64     | I   | 17           | Killed near Weldon R. R., Sept. 30, '64.                                   |

|                       |    |               |     |              |                                                              |
|-----------------------|----|---------------|-----|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| Collins, James S.     | 44 | Jan. 21, '64  | I   | 17           | Killed near Weldon R. R., Sept. 30, '64.                     |
| Cross, Levi A.        | 15 | Mar. 29, '64  | F   | 17           | Missing, in action May 6, '64.                               |
| Clark, Geo. M.        | 28 | Sept. 1, '62  | E   | 16           | Pro. 2d Lt. Co. D, Dec. 31, '62, Mustered out July 14, 1863. |
| Coreoran, John        |    |               | E   | 8            |                                                              |
| Cushman, Cornelius J. | 22 | Aug. 19, '62  | A   | 12           | Mustered out July 14, 1863.                                  |
| Denary, Edward W.     | 28 | Dec. 19, '63  | H   | 2d U. S.S.S. | Killed at Petersburg, June 19, 1864.                         |
| Downie, Andrew J.     | 20 | June 30, '64  | I   | 17           | Mustered out July 14, 1865.                                  |
| Down, Herbert H.      | 18 | Dec. 21, '63  | K   | 10           | Died Sept. 10, 1864.                                         |
| Dunn, Daniel          | 40 | Dec. 19, '63  | H   | 10           | Mustered out June 29, 1865.                                  |
| Duphinney, Phillip D. | 32 | Dec. 23, '63  | D   | 9            | Mustered out May 23, 1865.                                   |
| Davis, Edmond P.      | 18 | Sept. 18, '62 | H   | 16           | Killed at Gettysburgh, July 3, 1863.                         |
| Demary, Edward W.     | 27 | "             | H   | 16           | Mustered out July 14, 1863.                                  |
| Emery, Elmer A.       | 21 | Aug. 14, '62  | I   | 2            | Mustered out June 19, '65                                    |
| Emery Nelson W.       | 25 | Dec. 11, '61  | 1st | Bat.         | Sergeant. Mus. out Aug. 10, 1864.                            |
| Emery Norman E.       | 18 | Feb. 13, '62  | "   | "            | Mustered out Aug. 10, 1864.                                  |
| Giddings Henry E.     | 18 | Oct. 30, '61  | H   | 2d U. S.S.S. | Corp. Died June 14, '62.                                     |
| Gilson, Collamer E.   | 20 | Aug. 20, '61  | C   | 4            | Mustered out Sept. 30, '64.                                  |
| Gilson, Forest D.     | 19 | May 7, '61    | I   | 2            | Mustered out June 29, '64.                                   |
| Gilson, Henry H.      |    |               | G   | 7            |                                                              |
| Grunt, Chas. C.       | 39 | Sept. 14, '61 | I   | 2            | Re. En. Dec. 21, '63. Killed at Wilderness, May 5, 1864.     |
| Gay, Stillman O.      | 28 | Dec. 19, '63  | H   | 2d U. S.S.S. | Died March 31, 1864.                                         |
| Giddings, Benj. F.    | 21 | Mar. 7, '64   | G   | 17           | Prom. 1st Lt. Co. B, Aug. 24, '64.                           |
| Giddings, Hiram A.    | 30 | Feb. 25, '64  | G   | 17           | Sergeant. Mustered out July 14, '65.                         |

| Names.              | Age. | Date of Enlistment. | Date of Muster. | Co. | Reg't. | Remarks.                                                                             |
|---------------------|------|---------------------|-----------------|-----|--------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Gray, Noah W.       | 18   | Dec. 22, '63        | Dec. 24, '63    | K   | 10     | Mustered out June 29, '65.                                                           |
| Halpin, Phillip     | 24   | Aug. 15, '62        | Sept. 30, '62   | I   | 2      | Died July 12, '64, of wounds received at Spottsylvania, May 10, '64.                 |
| Hawkins, Geo. O.    | 21   | Sept. 26, '61       | Oct. 15, '61    | E   | 6      | Discharged July 8, '62.                                                              |
| Hoadly, Henry C.    | 26   | Jan. 1, '62         | Feb. 12, '62    | G   | 7      | Died Sept. 29, '62.                                                                  |
| Holden, Philemon    | 28   | Aug. 15, '62        | Sept. 30, '62   | I   | 2      | Died Feb. 27, '64.                                                                   |
| Holmes, Elmer G.    | 21   | Aug. 14, '62        | Oct. 16, '62    | I   | 2      | Killed at Spottsylvania, May 12, '64.                                                |
| Hagar, Henry D.     | 18   | Dec. 25, '63        | Dec. 25, '63    | D   | 5      | Died of w'ds rec'd in act'n May 27, '64                                              |
| Holmes, John W.     | 32   | Mar. 19, '63        | Dec. 31, '63    | H   | 6      | Mus. out May 13, '65.                                                                |
| Hawkins, Floyd F.   | 27   | Sept. 18, '62       | Oct. 23, '62    | H   | 16     | Prom. Serg't. Mus. out Aug. 10, '63.                                                 |
| Hawkins, Geo. O.    | 22   | "                   | Oct. 23, '82    | H   | 16     | Prom. 2d. Lt. Co. K, Jan'y 16, '63, Mus. out Aug. 10, '63.                           |
| Hoisington, David,  | 31   | Aug. 19, '62        | Oct. 4, '62     | A   | 12     | Mus. out July 14, '63.                                                               |
| Jenness, Ozro A.    | 21   | June 1, '61         | July 16, '61    | A   | 3      | Dis. July 28, '62, died at Reading, '62.                                             |
| Johnson Napoleon B. | 18   | Dec. 24, '61        | Feb. 12, '62    | H   | 7      | Dis. Oct. 15, '62.                                                                   |
| Keyes, Gould D.     | 24   | Sept. 4, '61        | Sept. 20, '61   | D   | 4      | Re-enlisted. Mus. out July 13, '65.                                                  |
| Kellogg, Henry E.   | 39   | May 20, '64         | July 6, '64     | I   | 17     | Discharged Dec. 18, '64.                                                             |
| Keyes, Elmer D.     |      | Sept. 18, '62       | Oct. 23, '62    | H   | 16     | 1st Lt. date of com. Sept. 18, '62. Prom. Capt. Dec. 31, '62. Mus. out Aug. 10, '63. |
| Keyes, W. W.        | 30   | Sept. 18, '62       | Oct. 23, '62    | H   | 16     | Serg't. Mus. out Aug. 10, '63.                                                       |
| Lang, Albert W.     | 18   | Dec. 18, '63        | Dec. 18, '63    | I   | 10     | Died Aug. 4, '64.                                                                    |
| Lawrence, Alfred C. | 18   | Dec. 25, '63        | Dec. 25, '63    | D   | 5      | Dis. May 26, '65.                                                                    |
| Marcy, Howard F.    | 40   | Feb. 13, '65        | Feb. 13, '65    | E   | 17     | Mus. out July 14, '65.                                                               |
| Mahoney, Edmund F.  | 22   | Jan'y 29, '62       | Feb. 18, '62    | 1st | Bat.   | Mus. out Aug. 10, '64.                                                               |
| Marsh, Henry C.     | 22   | June 1, '61         | July 16, '61    | A   | 3      | Re-en. Dec. 21, '63. Mus. out July 11, '65                                           |



|                     |    |               |               |               |      |      |                                                                    |
|---------------------|----|---------------|---------------|---------------|------|------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Mahoney, Edmund F.  | 22 | Jan'y 2, '61  | Aug. 16, '62  | Sept. 30, '62 | A    | 3    | Died June 6, '64, of wounds.<br>Mus. out July 14, '65.             |
| Messenger, Wm. O.   | 20 | May 21, '64   | May 21, '64   | July 6, '64   | I    | 17   |                                                                    |
| Mason, John         | 21 | Dec. 31, '63  | Dec. 31, '63  | Jan'y 5, '64  | E    | 9    | Discharged July 1, '65.                                            |
| Merrill, Lewis W.   | 22 | May 26, '64   | May 26, '64   | July 6, '64   | I    | 17   | Re-en. Feb. 15, '64. Mus. out Mar 14, '66.                         |
| Minor, Henry A.     | 18 | Jan'y 7, '62  | Jan'y 7, '62  | Feb. 12, '62  | G    | 7    |                                                                    |
| Noyes, James H.     | 21 | Feb. 13, '65  | Feb. 13, '65  | Feb. 13, '65  | I    | 2    | Mus. out July 15, '65.                                             |
| Nichols, Amos E.    | 32 | Sept. 9, '62  | Sept. 9, '62  | Oct. 4, '62   | I    | 12   | Mus. out July 14, '63.                                             |
| Nichols, Moses      | 23 | Aug. 23, '62  | Aug. 23, '62  | Oct. 4, '62   | A    | 12   | Mus. out July 19, '63.                                             |
| North, Edward M.    |    |               |               |               | U.S. | Navy |                                                                    |
| O'Brien, Dulan      | 34 | Feb. 25, '62  | Feb. 25, '62  | Apr. 12, '62  | D    | 6    | Deserted Aug. 30, '63.                                             |
| Pierce, Geo. W.     | 33 | Feb. 13, '95  | Feb. 13, '95  | Feb. 13, '65  | I    | 2    | Died April 2, '65.                                                 |
| Pierce, Rufus F.    | 18 | Mar. 30, '64  | Mar. 30, '64  | Apr. 12, '64  | E    | 17   | Mus. out July 14, '65.                                             |
| Pappeneau, George   |    |               |               |               |      | 8    |                                                                    |
| Pifer, Peter        | 18 | Dec. 18, '92  | Dec. 18, '92  | Dec. 18, '62  | K    | 10   | Mus. out June 29, '65.                                             |
| Piper, Nathaniel    | 32 | Aug. 19, '62  | Aug. 19, '62  | Oct. 4, '62   | A    | 12   | Mus. out July 14, '63.                                             |
| Paige, Edwin M.     | 18 | Aug. 19, '62  | Aug. 19, '62  | Oct. 4, '62   | A    | 12   | Died June 21, '63.                                                 |
| Parker, Denison     | 18 | Aug. 25, '92  | Aug. 25, '92  | Oct. 4, '62   | A    | 12   | Mus. out July 14, '63.                                             |
| Price, Edgar C.     | 18 | Dec. 18, '63  | Dec. 18, '63  | Dec. 24, '63  | K    | 10   |                                                                    |
| Richards, Andrew    | 21 | Sept. 20, '61 | Sept. 20, '61 | Oct. 15, '61  | C    | 6    | Died Aug. 2, '62.                                                  |
| Spaulding, Simon H. | 18 | Dec. 19, '63  | Dec. 19, '63  | Oct. 15, '61  | 3d   | Bat. | Mus. out July 18, '65.                                             |
| Sharmen, John       | 32 | July 14, '64  | July 14, '64  | July 14, '64  | H    | Cav. | Deserted June 29, '65.                                             |
| Shea, Bryan         | 21 | Sept. 30, '61 | Sept. 30, '61 | Oct. 15, '61  | K    | 6    | Re-en. Dec. 15, '63. Mus. out June 26, '65.                        |
| Spear, Edwin S.     | 29 | Aug. 14, '62  | Aug. 14, '62  | Sept. 30, '62 | I    | 2    | Mus. out June 19, '65.                                             |
| Twiss, Samuel B.    | 25 | July 4, '64   | July 4, '64   | July 6, '64   | I    | 17   | Died at Salisbury, N. C., Jan. 15, '65.                            |
| Valley, Felix.      | 21 | Aug. 17, '61  | Aug. 17, '61  | Sept. 20, '61 | C    | 4    | Prom. Cor. Re-enlisted Dec. 15, '63.<br>Mustered out July 13, '65. |
| Wait, Henry O.      |    |               |               |               |      |      |                                                                    |
| Wilkins, Lucius O.  | 37 | Dec. 2, '61   | Dec. 2, '61   | Feb. 12, '62  | B    | 7    | Prom. Cor. Died Nov. 5, '63.                                       |

| Names.               | Age. | Date of Enlistment. | Date of Muster. | Co. | Reg't | Remarks.                                                               |
|----------------------|------|---------------------|-----------------|-----|-------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Wilkins, Wallace W.  | 29   | Aug. 15, '62        | Sept. 30, '62   | I   | 2     | Mus. out June 19, '65.                                                 |
| Whitmore, Kosciusko  | 21   | Feb. 25, '62        | Apr. 12, '62    | C   | 6     | Taken prisoner July 1, '62, and supposed to have died at Richmond, Va. |
| Williams, Charles M. | 18   | Mar. 4, '62         | Apr. 12, '62    | C   | 6     | Corp. Discharged Aug. 11, '65.                                         |
| Wells, Edwin L.      | 18   | June 13, '64        | July 6, '64     | I   | 17    | Killed at Petersburg, by a stray shot,                                 |
| Willey, Harvey P.    | 19   | May 7, '64          | Apr. 12, '64    | G   | 17    | June 25, '64.                                                          |
| Wait, Wm. A.         | 53   | Aug. 19, '62        | Oct. 4, '62     | A   | 12    | Mus. out July 14, '63.                                                 |
| Wait, Wm. D.         | 25   | Aug. 19, '62        | Oct. 4, '62     | A   | 12    | Mus. out July 14, '63.                                                 |
| Weston, Joseph D.    | 22   | Sept. 4, '62        | Oct. 23, '62    | C   | 16    | Mus. out Aug. 10, '63.                                                 |
| White, Azro          | 28   | Sept. 1, '62        | Oct. 23, '62    | E   | 16    | Mus. out Aug. 10, '63.                                                 |

DRAFTED AND ENTERED SERVICE.—Phillips, Lucien Co. C, 6th Reg't.

VOLUNTEERS RE-ENLISTED.—Charles C. Grant, James H. Noyes, Henry C. Marsh, Edwin S. Spear, Henry O. Wait, Herman J. White.

ENROLLED MEN WHO FURNISHED SUBSTITUTES.—Gilbert A. Davis, Henry Elgar, Edmund S. Hammond, Fred B. Merrill, John B. Merrill, James P. Osborn, Forest G. Persons, Nelson B. Sherman, Ethelbert O. Sherwin, Marcus A. Spaulding.

FURNISHED UNDER DRAFT, PAID COMMUTATION.—Edgerton Baldwin, Richard Burnham, John S. Corey, Justin S. Davis, Francis McGrath, Oscar Miller, Ambler Sheldon, Amsdell Sheldon, Clark Wardner,

PROCURED SUBSTITUTES.—Marcellus Bryant, Edmond S. Fay.

The following named persons, present residents of Reading, were in the Union Armies and fought for the preservation of the Union, but did not go upon the quota of Reading:—Carlos Bryant, Wm. W. Bailey, Lorenzo G. Coolidge, Geo. W. Davis, Wm. H. H. Dugan, Abel F. Gates, Curtis H. Gilson, Charles W. Harlow, Rev. Geo. A. Parker, Oscar Pierce, Jonas A. Putnam, David D. Smith.

## CHAPTER IX.

## SALE OF PAUPERS—SPOTTED FEVER—MASONIC—MURDER TRIAL—TOWN CLERKS—CONSTABLES AND REPRESENTATIVES.

The change in town expenses is noticeable. In 1801-2 the tax for town purposes was only one cent on each dollar of the Grand List, in 1805, five mills, and in 1806, three mills. The present annual rate of taxation for town purposes is 75 per cent on the Grand List. The support of paupers at an early day, seems to have been a source of some disturbance, and the records afford some curious instances of "sales of paupers" to the lowest bidder.

March 2, 1791, the town "voted to set up Taylor's child at the lowest bidder, if Taylor does not take it away before the present time is up with Leavens."

This practice was kept up so late as 1816, when the record reads :

"At a vendue holden on the 19th day of March 1816 for the purpose of venduing the Poor of the town of Reading at the store of Farwell and Hawkins in Reading, &c., Flynn Pearsons bid off B——n P——r and wife." &c.

The purchase of a farm affording this unfortunate class some of the comforts of a home, has improved their condition and stopped the barbarism of an annual "sale."

The most remarkable season of mortality was in February and March, 1813, when more than sixty persons died of the spotted fever.

The subjoined list is taken from a copy of the "Vermont Journal," dated May 10, 1813, printed and published at Windsor, by Alden Spooner :

The following persons have died in the town of Reading since the last week in January, 1813: A child of Eben Herriek, two children of Peter Darby, Mr. and Mrs. Hammond, Widow Mason, wife of Thomas Townshend, wife of Capt. Hawkins, the wife of E. Bigelow, Esq., Asa Stone, Mr. Oliver Holmes and wife, a child of Maj. E. Fay, a child of T. Estabrooks, Miss Nabby Holmes, Joseph Bigelow and wife, Widow Washburn, wife of Abel Amsden, William Goddard, two children of Daniel Davis, Thomas Gordon and child, Ira Hathorn, Ebenezer Weld and wife, Benjamin Hathorn, Jr., Pearly Weld, Ziba Hail, child of John Sawyer, 2d, Seth Thompson, and wife, the wife of Josiah Fay, Josiah Harris, Widow Sawyer, Mrs. Marks and child, wife of A. Marks, Widow Gilson, Marston Rogers, Ephraim Kile, Jason Smith, a child of Joseph Adams, a child of Wm. Barr, a child of — Capron, Wm. Kile, Jr., John Kile, Royal Pearson and child, Daniel Peabody, a child of Jared Bigelow, a child of Jonathan Grandy, a child of Jonathan Morse, Mr. Knoulton, Thomas Lewis, a child of Noah Cady, the consort of Ezekiel Davis, two children of Moses Nutting, a child of William Clark.

The "Eastern Star Lodge," No. 41, of Free Masons, was established here in 1815, under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of

Vermont, and at one time had 100 members. Their Lodge was at Shedd's Hall at the Centre, Amsden's hotel, and subsequently at Hawkin's hotel, and on the burning of the latter their jewels and records were destroyed. No list of the officers and members can be found. The Lodge became extinct in consequence of the anti-masonic excitement following the abduction of Morgan, and has never been re-organized. Dr. Silas Bowen, Judge Thomas F. Hammond, and others, were Masters of this Lodge, and Benj. Sawyer and Benoni Buck were secretaries.

1844. Perhaps the most startling incident in the history of the town was the finding the lifeless body of a babe near the bend in the river south of F. Hawkins' and the arrest of Mrs. Merrill, the mother of the child. She was first brought before Luther Kendall, Esq., a justice of the peace, for preliminary examination, on the charge of murder. The defense was insanity. S. Fullam, State's attorney, conducted the prosecution and Julius Converse, (present Governor of the State) and J. Q. Hawkins conducted the defence. Public sentiment was divided and was wrought up to fever heat. Esq. Kendall, after hearing the evidence, discharged her. She was re-arrested on the same charge, and the result of a hearing before Calvin French, Esq., a justice of the peace, was that she was duly committed to jail. She was subsequently indicted, but on trial before a jury in the county court was acquitted.



## TOWN OFFICERS.

COMPILED BY SEWALL FULLAM.

|      | Town Clerk.       | Constable.      | Representative  |
|------|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1779 |                   |                 | Andrew Spear.   |
| 1780 | Jedadiah Leavens. | Barakiah Cady.  | Thos. Hapgood.  |
| 1781 | " "               | Nedabiah Cady.  |                 |
| 1782 | Elias Jones.      | John Sawyer.    | Andrew Spear.   |
| 1783 | " "               | Aaron Kimball.  | Joseph Sawyer.  |
| 1784 | Thomas Hapgood.   | David Hapgood.  | John Weld.      |
| 1785 | John Weld.        | William Howard. | " "             |
| 1786 | " "               | Thos. Hapgood.  | " "             |
| 1787 | " "               | Nath'l Pratt,   | " "             |
| 1788 | " "               | Asa Wilkins.    | " "             |
| 1789 | " "               | Thomas Fay.     | " "             |
| 1790 | " "               | Abel Amsden.    | Elkannah Day.   |
| 1791 | Elkannah Day.     | Isaac Kimball.  | " "             |
| 1792 | " "               | Henry Carlton.  | John Weld.      |
| 1793 | Elias Jones.      | Moses Chaplain. | Aaron Kimball.  |
| 1794 | Solomon Keyes.    | " "             | Abijah Stone.   |
| 1795 | " "               | Elisha Bigelow. | " "             |
| 1796 | " "               | " "             | David Hapgood.  |
| 1797 | " "               | Moses Chaplain. | " "             |
| 1798 | " "               | Noah Bigelow.   | Moses Chaplain. |
| 1799 | " "               | Elias Jones.    | " "             |
| 1800 | Elias Jones.      | Thos. Brown.    | Solomon Keyes.  |
| 1801 | Solomon Keyes.    | Jona. Shedd.    | Elias Jones.    |
| 1802 | " "               | Abiah Rice.     | " "             |
| 1803 | " "               | Elisha Bigelow. | " "             |
| 1804 | " "               | Nathan Sherwin. | " "             |
| 1805 | Elias Jones.      | " "             | " "             |
| 1806 | Solomon Keyes.    | " "             | " "             |
| 1807 | Elias Jones.      | " "             | " "             |
| 1808 | Wm. L. Hawkins.   | " "             | " "             |
| 1809 | " "               | " "             | Lemmel Ide.     |
| 1810 | " "               | " "             | Solomon Keyes.  |
| 1811 | " "               | " "             | Jona. Shedd.    |
| 1812 | Jona. Shedd.      | " "             | " "             |
| 1813 | Wm. L. Hawkins.   | " "             | Wm. L. Hawkins. |
| 1814 | " "               | " "             | " "             |
| 1815 | " "               | " "             | Jona. Shedd.    |
| 1816 | Jona. Shedd.      | " "             | Sewall Fullam.  |
| 1817 | John S. Hawkins.  | " "             | " "             |
| 1818 | " "               | Simeon Buck.    | " "             |
| 1819 | " "               | " "             | " "             |
| 1820 | " "               | " "             | " "             |
| 1821 | " "               | " "             | Jona. Shedd.    |
| 1822 | " "               | " "             | " "             |

|      | Town Clerk.                          | Constable.                          | Representative.   |
|------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1823 | Abel Gilson, Jr.                     | Jona. Clark.                        | Jona. Shedd.      |
| 1824 | " "                                  | " "                                 | Sam'l C. Loveland |
| 1825 | " "                                  | " "                                 | " "               |
| 1826 | " "                                  | " "                                 | Abel Gilson, Jr.  |
| 1827 | " "                                  | " " and<br>Henry Conant, last half. | Sam'l C. Loveland |
| 1828 | " "                                  | Solomon Keyes.                      | " "               |
| 1829 | " "                                  | " "                                 | Simeon Buck.      |
| 1830 | " "                                  | " "                                 | " "               |
| 1831 | " "                                  | " "                                 | " "               |
| 1832 | " "                                  | " "                                 | William Felch.    |
| 1833 | Sam'l C. Loveland.                   | " "                                 | " "               |
| 1834 | " "                                  | " "                                 | Shubael C. Shedd. |
| 1835 | " "                                  | " "                                 | " "               |
| 1836 | Bridg'n Hapgood.                     | " "                                 | Bridg'n Hapgood   |
| 1837 | " "                                  | " "                                 | " "               |
| 1838 | " "                                  | Rufus Buck.                         | Solomon Keyes.    |
| 1839 | " "                                  | " "                                 | " "               |
| 1840 | " "                                  | " "                                 | Benoni Buck.      |
| 1841 | " "                                  | Solomon Keyes.                      | " "               |
| 1842 | " "                                  | " "                                 | John Wheeler.     |
| 1843 | " "                                  | Daniel Stearns.                     | " "               |
| 1844 | " "                                  | Amos Mann.                          | Rufus Forbush.    |
| 1845 | Wm. L. Hawkins.                      | " "                                 | " "               |
| 1846 | Bridg'n Hapgood.                     | " "                                 | John Wheeler.     |
| 1847 | W. L. Hawkins.                       | " "                                 | Chas. Buck.       |
| 1848 | " "                                  | O. A. Keyes.                        | " "               |
| 1849 | " "                                  | " "                                 | Solomon Keyes.    |
| 1850 | Levi Aldrich.                        | " "                                 | Luther Carlton.   |
| 1851 | " "                                  | Amos Mann.                          | " "               |
| 1852 | " "                                  | Wm. S. A. Morse.                    | Hiram Goddard.    |
| 1853 | " "                                  | " "                                 | Charles Buck.     |
|      | From May 17,<br>Stephen H. Thompson. |                                     |                   |
| 1854 | V. R. Henry.                         | Ferd'nd Hawkins.                    | " "               |
| 1855 | Gorton B. Merrill.                   | " "                                 | Sam'l Herrick.    |
| 1856 | " "                                  | " "                                 | " "               |
| 1857 | " "                                  | " "                                 | None.             |
| 1858 | " "                                  | C. D. Shattuck.                     | Josiah Q. Hawkins |
| 1859 | " "                                  | Ferd'nd Hawkins.                    | Washingt'n Keyes  |
| 1860 | " "                                  | " "                                 | " "               |
| 1861 | " "                                  | " "                                 | Willard H. Dow.   |
|      | From May 24,<br>William L. Page.     |                                     |                   |
| 1862 | H. H. Hammond.                       | C. D. Shattuck.                     | " "               |
| 1863 | " "                                  | Ferd'nd Hawkins.                    | M. E. Goddard     |
| 1864 | " "                                  | James W. Fulton.                    | " "               |
| 1865 | " "                                  | Chas. Whitmore.                     | Sumner Fletcher.  |
| 1866 | " "                                  | " "                                 | " "               |

|      | Town Clerk.    | Constable.       | Representative.       |
|------|----------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| 1867 | H. H. Hammond. | Joshua F. Davis. | Prosper Merrill.      |
| 1868 | " "            | Ferd'nd Hawkins. | " "                   |
| 1869 | " "            | Luther Kendall.  | W. P. Chamberlin.     |
| 1870 | " "            | " "              | Hiram F. Thomas.      |
| 1871 | " "            | " "              | Hiram F. Thomas.      |
| 1872 | " "            | " "              | Died during his Term. |
| 1873 | W. W. Keyes.   | Ferd'nd Hawkins. | Gilbert A. Davis.     |

## CHAPTER X.—THOMAS JEFFERSON SAWYER, D. D.

BY THOMAS CURLEY.

In going back four generations, we find that James Sawyer was Cornet in the English army. According to the usual tradition, three of his sons emigrated to this country, one of whom settled in Connecticut. This son, Joseph Sawyer, there married Hannah, daughter of Thomas and Sarah Hutchins. Joseph had a family of eight children, of whom Benjamin was the sixth. Benjamin was born Feb. 3d, 1762, in the town of Pomfret, Conn., and was herefore a fellow townsman with Gen. Putnam of Revolutionary fame. In the year 1787 Joseph, then living in Reading, Vt., married Sally York, April 12, to whom were born ten children—six sons and four daughters—the seventh of whom was Thomas Jefferson, the subject of this sketch, who was born in Reading, Vt., Jan. 9th, 1804. The ancestry of young Sawyer were undoubtedly English on his father's and mother's side. Thomas Sawyer obtained his early education under the same difficulties which were to many whose youth was spent in a new and wild country. He attended school perhaps six months in the year, until he was old enough to work on the farm, then only three months in the winter. It must be remembered that the teachers of his time were remarkable rather for their great physical than mental strength, and that it was considered sufficient for a young man's education to do the examples to "Rule of Three" or through "Fractions." Under such influences it seems to be quite a sure sign of success for a young man to set himself at work preparing for college as young Sawyer did.

Possibly there were influences acting on him of which we know not, but we do know that his parents were honest, upright, well-to-do people, whose influence would certainly tend to make him moral if not religious, though their faith (Universalism) at that time was considered a heresy. Perhaps unlike many farmer boys, to whom the rainy days and long winter nights furnish much time for study or amusement, he went to his chamber and studied instead of going to the store; or with book in hand he clung to the old earth, winter evenings instead of going to parties or junkets;

though his genial and mirthful disposition tells us that he would be a leader in the sports and amusements of his time. We do not learn that he exhibited any of the remarkable traits which are usually attributed to the youth of great men, except ready wit; hence we say that he was probably guided, as many of us have been, by unexplainable circumstances the beginning and end of which we knew not. At the age of eighteen he commenced fitting for college at Chester Academy in Chester, Vt. During winter he taught school and during summers he worked at home on the farm; his books were always with him while fitting, and he used every spare moment at home studying them, for as they say who knew him then, he was more fond of mental than physical labor. In this connection we may mention the following incident: A neighbor passing him one day as he stood under a tree whetting his scythe, asked "how he liked it." "O," says young Sawyer, "it *work*." At the Academy he exhibited considerable ability in debate, and was always ready for a combat of words; this same readiness clung to him quite closely in after life; then he was as strong an upholder of some of the tenets of Calvinism as he is now of the contrary. At the age of twenty-two he entered Middlebury College and as he says himself his class standing was only fair. Would it were possible to relate a few of the incidents necessarily connected with his college life, but your writer is unable to learn of any of importance. One of his classmates, Edwin F. Hatfield, afterwards became an eminent orthodox writer and minister in New York; he also became a slanderer and not honorable opponent of Universalism and Universalists; through one of the orthodox papers he called Universalists immoral, licentious, and little better than heathen; Sawyer answered him by letter through the press, the letter was courteous, though severe, for Dr. Sawyer knew how to be severe and gentlemanly at the same time; Hatfield's statements were returned to him, answered, their original application reversed and ably supported by personal examples from Hatfield's own followers and it was also well sprinkled with satire. The letter is worthy to be read and may be found in any of the Universalist papers of 1844. He passed his time in his college course almost not rich young men of his time did, in study, farm work in summer, and school teaching in winter. In 1829 he graduated with a class of eighteen. After leaving college he went to Winchester, N. H. and studied theology with the Rev. W. S. Balch, who afterwards became eminent as a preacher and lecturer, and who has since been titled D. D. but refused the title. He studied with the above named minister a short time and was ordained as a Universalist minister, Sept. 17th, 1829, Father Ballou preaching the ordination sermon. Since he was ordained the same year in which he graduated it must be inferred that he studied theology not little in college. In fact, forty years ago the amount of theological study was very small before one began to preach. Early in 1830 he was called to a then small society in New York city.



where Universalism was at a very low ebb. Of this society Horace Greeley speaks, in his "Recollections of a Busy Life," thus: "I made my way, on the first Sunday morning of my sojourn in New York, to the little chapel in Grand St., near Pitt, about the size of an average country school house, where the Rev. Thomas J. Sawyer, then quite young, ministered to a congregation of perhaps a hundred souls, to which congregation I soon afterwards attached myself, remaining a member of it until he left the city." Notwithstanding "the dark days of this period" as the Doctor has since called them, he entered the field with a young ambition and trusting heart, which nothing could daunt. His congregation, after worshipping two years in Grand St., and becoming somewhat larger, rented a church on Orchard St., which it afterwards purchased, where he ministered until the autumn of 1845. In connection with filling the pulpit he edited for many years, in company with Rev. Philo Price, the *Christian Messenger*, which they ably conducted for several years. In conducting this paper, he certainly gratified his love for discussion and also did much to bring Universalism into notice in that city. In 1834, at the General Convention of Universalists at Albany, he proposed measures for forming a Universalist Historical Society, the matter was acted upon, and a Historical Library has been growing under his care ever since, which is now connected with Tuft's College Library. As secretary of this society he became acquainted with several German theologians, and through them was made a member of the Historical Theological Society of Leipsic.

We must now turn back to perhaps one of the most important epochs of his life, (or of any young man's life,) his marriage; it would probably be interesting if an account of his courtship could be given and we could catch a glimpse of that unseen affection which exists in every heart. Perhaps you can best understand his state of feeling at that time by this extract from his *Memoir* of Rev. S. R. Smith, under the chapter of marriage. He says, "I doubt if any one ever reached the age of fifteen years without finding his heart more or less scarred by the shafts of the cruel archer; and to grow up to manhood without suffering from such attacks, is I hold, quite impossible. Some may have done so, nevertheless, but I do not believe it, and if any such beings ever existed they must have been so unlike myself. I do not blush to confess it, that I should regard them destitute of one element, at least, of a true humanity." However, it is certain that he married in the month of September, 1831, Miss Caroline M. Fisher of Newton, Mass., a lady of rare accomplishments, and great literary ability, one who has been a voluminous contributor to many of our magazines, and has successfully edited "*The Rose of Sharon*" and "*The Ladies' Repository*." Besides being recognized a fine poetess, she has written and translated from the French and German many fine stories. This couple were blest with a family of seven children, although two of them died while they were at Clinton, as he had

moved there in 1854. At Clinton he seemed to be in the right place, at the head of Clinton Liberal Institute; indeed, if any institution needs a man of ripe scholarship and sound judgment it is an academy, for there many young men and women finish their education preparatory to entering active life, and a good teacher's influence is of primary importance; at Clinton he established and was at the head of the first Universalist Theological School in this country. The Institute flourished very much under his charge, and yet it is probable that but few men could have endured the amount of labor performed by him, while there. Besides conducting these two schools he preached regularly Sundays, contributed to several religious journals, wrote a memoir of Rev. S. R. Smith, and we know not how much more.

In 1847 Mr. Sawyer issued a card calling on all Universalists interested in educational matters to meet in convention at New York, May 18th, 1847. As a result of this convention agents were appointed to raise one hundred thousand dollars for the establishment of a college. The one hundred thousand dollars were obtained, and a short time after a building called Tuft's College was raised on Walnut Hill, Medford, Mass. He was chosen President of the College but declined the appointment, subsequently he was offered the presidency of St. Lawrence University and also that of Lombard University, both of which he refused. In 1852 Harvard College, an institution not lavish with its honors, although never failing to recognize true scholarship, conferred the degree of D. D. on him. In 1852 the Doctor resigned the principalship of Clinton L. Institute, and returned to New York to take charge of the fifth Universalist society, but soon after resumed charge of Orchard St. Society, with which he was connected before going to Clinton. Henceforward, until the spring of 1861, it was the most active and so to speak, public part of Dr. Sawyer's life; during this time he had many theological discussions with those who were without and within the Universalist denomination, both on the platform and through the press. One of the first important discussions was with a Rev. Mr. Wescott of the Baptist denomination in the Broadway Tabernacle, commencing April 8, 1855, and continuing eight evenings, on the question as to whether the Bible teaches *the final salvation of all men*, Dr. Sawyer taking the affirmative. In connection with this we may mention the fact that this Tabernacle was refused a short time before this discussion, to a body of Universalists on account of their faith, so bigoted were many at that time, in that sometimes called very wicked city, but the letter written by Dr. Sawyer in answer to that refusal was such as only he could write; he condemned their action in terms so severe, but true, that his enemies could only look up to him and say you are right. This discussion, and the one following with Mr. Wescott, created quite a stir in the religious world, the large hall being filled every evening, and it did much to increase Dr. Sawyer's already wide spread reputation, and it also effected much to-

wards filling the Doctor's church, as Wescott himself acknowledged. In these discussions Dr. Sawyer showed himself to be a master of debate ; so much so, indeed, that his eminent orthodox friends afterwards preferred or seemed not willing to meet him in open debate. Soon after the above discussion he held another, which also attracted great crowds, with Rev. Mr. Wescott, as to whether the scriptures teach *endless misery*, in which he again did himself great credit, showing himself to be a great theological controversialist, and no mean metaphysician ; again, as a direct result of this discussion, a great number became Universalists and joined themselves to the different churches in the city. Rev. Hosea Ballou, an eminent divine, Rev. Thomas Whittemore, J. D. Williamson, D. D. and many other eminent Universalist theologians held and taught the belief of *predestination* in opposition to *free-agency*. Dr. Sawyer was one of the first of his faith to break away from and oppose the doctrine of predestination and advocate free-agency, a doctrine which is *now generally* held by Universalists. In his advocacy of free-agency he was strongly opposed, and finally entered into an extended discussion with Dr. Williamson, also a distinguished metaphysician ; it was carried on for several months through the papers. Here again he showed his logical powers, and invincible spirit when pleading for the truth. About this time, also, 1854, in opposition to all great exponents of his faith, before his time, he denounced the doctrine of "death and glory," or immediate entrance into heaven after death ; but taught that all men would *finally* be restored to happiness. For advocating this doctrine, he was accused of trying to destroy Universalism, and many harsh things were said against him by his brother ministers ; but fearless when he thinks himself in the right he conquered, and those doctrines so ably advocated by him are accepted and believed by what is *now* known as the *new school* of Universalists ; or it may be said by far the greater portion of his denomination. Later he held several important discussions on the teachings of the Bible, with orthodox divines, which space and time do not permit us to mention.

He retired in the spring of '61 to Clinton, N. Y., where he remained working his farm and preaching until 1863, when he was called to the editorship of the *Christian Ambassador*, a denominational paper of New York, which had quite a circulation and considerable influence. Dr. Sawyer ably conducted this paper for three years, when he again retired, but now to a farm recently purchased in Woodbridge, N. J., where he remained in seclusion, we were going to say, for he participated very little in those duties which formerly demanded his attention, though he was by no means idle at this time, for a man of his character cannot be.

In 1870 he was invited to assume, and accepted the duties of the head of Tuft's Theological School, which we hope may prosper many years under his care. It is said "circumstances sometimes make the man." If so, it is possible that Dr. Sawyer would not



enjoy his present reputation, if he had not gone to New York in 1830, to preach a doctrine despised there, as much as the first teachings of our Saviour, eighteen hundred years ago; or in other words, it is doubtful if he had attained his present eminence as a teacher of orthodoxy. He is one of those peculiar men who live and become greatest in the face of strong opposition; for he not being what the world calls ambitious, has great perseverance, love of truth, and an extreme love for discussion, therefore as an orthodox too many would agree with him, and at the time he started in the world too few would oppose him. Furthermore, being a deep thinker, close reasoner and fine rhetorician, he must needs, with these elements, and those before mentioned, do for his denomination what few men could do in New York.

Being very independent, and living a straight-forward and pure life, he commands the esteem of all men. In the pulpit, as in his writings, he is rather doctrinal than a reformer or essayist; he interests and pleases his audience, not so much through his eloquence as through his satire and wit, of which he possesses an abundance, and furthermore knows just where to use it. But few men hit the popular public taste as doctrinal preachers, because doctrines to be expounded must be metaphysical and logical, and consequently what many call dry and uninteresting; but Dr. Sawyer has made himself popular through this style. We think there is one reform of which he is an earnest advocate, or at least has so expressed himself in two college anniversary addresses, and that is the co-education of sexes in colleges, notwithstanding his strong opposition to woman suffrage.

As a writer Dr. Sawyer is clear, logical and minute, never leaving a difficult point unexplained. Most of his writings have been for papers and periodicals on theological subjects; many of them are truly valuable, and it is hoped that sometime they will be collected in book form.

Of his social characteristics and personal appearance perhaps the reader knows. He has a cheerful disposition, and this with his good health—the consequence of a temperate life and robust constitution, which is as yet but slightly touched with decay—tends to make him pleasant and agreeable as a social companion.

He is very dignified in his appearance, making the observer feel at once that he is a man of no ordinary ability. He has been a close student, and the amount of work done by him would quite overpower a man of an ordinary cast of mind and body.

The world owes much to him for his deep researches in theology and the history of theology.

G. H. Emerson D. D. says of him: "The man who can write the best octavo of Universalism, who can write it in the best English, and make a book that shall have the most durable fame, and a book too that shall have the most to command the attention and respect of appreciative and thinking minds outside of our denomination (the Universalist) is Dr. Sawyer." Perhaps we ought not



to close without stating that our opinion is that he has done as much if not more than any other person to mould and temper the present belief of Universalists. May his eminent services in the cause of truth and letters never be less, and may Reading's future sons profit by his noble life.



EBENEZER ROBINSON.

## CHAPTER XI.—A SKETCH OF HIS LIFE.

BY GEO. O. ROBINSON OF DETROIT, MICH.

One of the most remarkable of the early settlers of Reading was Ebenezer Robinson, who was a soldier of the Revolutionary war.

Ebenezer Robinson was born on the 14th day of February, 1765, in Lexington, Mass., near the place where afterwards occurred the battle of Lexington, and was the sixth son of James and Margaret Robinson, who lived at this time on the old homestead farm, (recently owned and occupied by the late Jonas Gammell, Esq.) which Jonathan Robinson, the father of James, purchased of Isaac Powers in 1706, and on which James was born August 30th, 1715.

Jonathan Robinson, the grandfather of Ebenezer, the subject of his sketch, was the son of William Robinson, and was born in Cambridge, Mass., on the 20th day of April, 1682. This is as far back as the writer of this sketch has been able to trace definitely the record of this family.

He came and settled in this town in the Spring of 1788, with his elder brother, James Robinson, who was then married. They located on the farm recently owned for a long time by Washington Keyes, Esq., near South Reading, ( now owned by Frank Gould, ) which was then a wilderness. They built here a log cabin near where stands a barn on this farm, and here, immediately after, was born a son of James Robinson, Ebenezer Robinson, 2d, ( named after the subject of this sketch, ) who for a long time was a resident of Felchville, and was familiarly known as Capt. Eb. In this log house the two brothers lived for several years, Ebenezer clearing and settling the farm adjoining, afterwards so long owned and occupied by himself, ( now owned and occupied by Rev. Ira Carter, ) till the Summer of 1792, when he built a frame house which is still standing as the wing or kitchen part of the present house, and in which in November 1792, having married Miss Hannah Ackley, he took his bride and established his own happy home. The Ackley family had, previous to this, immigrated from near Haddam, Connecticut, and settled above South Reading. In this frame house this devoted couple reared a large, intelligent prosperous family and spent a long happy life of sixty-six years together. In 1824 he built on a large upright two-story frame mansion as an addition in front, which in those times was considered an unusually fine residence, and still stands as a respectable mansion.

The hardships of clearing this hardwood wilderness farm were great, but he was always undaunted, and nothing baffled him. In the forenoon of his first day's work, he unfortunately cut his knee so bad that most persons would have given up in despair, but, nothing daunted, in a little over a week, he went out to work again despite of his lameness. During this early period he successfully dealt quite largely in the real estate of this vicinity and secured many permanent settlers on the same. At this time Aaron Goddard came into this town and purchased the farm south of him and boarded in his family while he made his first improvements thereon and till he married and established his own home. They were neighbors for more than half a century. Likewise, Truman Ackley bought of him and settled the present town-farm east and William Goddard, the farm north of him. While there, is much in his later history that is worthy of note, still his earlier life, previous to his settlement in this town, was full of remarkable vicissitudes and hardships. These were the frequent and favorite topics of his conversation, even to the last days of his long life.

In his ninety-first year, while he was in the full vigor of intellect, he gave his grandson, Frank M. Robinson of Dubuque, Iowa the following account of his early life, which was taken down in his own words :

" I was born in Lexington, Mass., on the 14th day of February 1765. I was therefore only a lad of about ten years, when the great struggle which gave freedom to the American people began, when

injured rights were to be vindicated, when I heard the report of musketry, in the opening scene in this conflict for freedom of conscience and freedom of country, in the streets and upon the Green of my own native town.

"Well do I remember the roll of the musketry and the noise of this battle of Lexington and the excitement consequent upon the retreat of the British soldiers down the valley past my home to Boston and of the subsequent severer conflict at Bunker's Hill, but a few miles distant.

"Thus early in life did I begin to cherish a warm love of country, amounting even to patriotism, and to be moved by a true sense of the dangers that seemed to threaten, not only the peace and quietude of the family and town, but the ruin of the whole colonial fabric.

"The engagements at Lexington, at Concord and upon Bunker's height warmed my bosom with more than a childish ardor to join the contest against British insolence and what savored of perpetual thralldom. Early in the spring of 1781 I entered the service, accompanied by my brothers Asa and James Robinson, on board the ship *Bellasaurias*, carrying 20 guns. The number on board, including officers, sailors and soldiers, was 125. We set sail from Boston under the command of Capt. James Munroe.

"We cruised off south, along the coast of Pennsylvania, and about the mouth of the Susquehanna river, thence still southerly till we were in the region of the Equator, where one day we discovered at early dawn what appeared in the dim distance to be a ship. We gave chase and after the lapse of many hours so neared the "stranger" that we were within cannon range of her.

"It was a much larger ship than our own and carried many more guns. We supposed her a heavy man-of-war of the British line, and began to prepare our noble vessel for an engagement. As is the custom in such instances, or in naval contests, all the sails were furled, except the top-sails and some of the stay-sails, which were just sufficient to govern the ships and change her position when necessary. Our cannon were charged and our torches were burning, and we waited but a change of position before we should salute her with a broadside.

"Meanwhile our enemy had ceased her flight, furled sail, cleared deck, prepared for fight, and was the first to discharge her cannon. This assault was unexpected by us, as it was not attended with the usual formalities of naval warfare on the part of the stranger. In view of this cowardly act our commander at once ordered us to draw alongside the unknown ship, to grapple and board her as quickly as possible, but no sooner was this movement commenced than to our great surprise, not to say our chagrin, the vessel, which we had regarded all along as an English man-of-war, hoisted Spanish colors, and thereby took away all pretext of warfare, except the ill-treatment we had received. Capt. Munroe was at first inclined to resent this indignity, this violation of the usages of



allied nations in their intercourse on the high seas in time of war. He however gave vent to his irritation and anger by addressing the Spanish Commander in the most pre-emptory and decisive manner and terms, in relation to his cowardly, dastardly conduct.

"The Spanish Captain very coolly submitted and offered to accompany us and to do us service when he could. The reply of Capt. Munroe was in these laconic words. 'Go your way. I prefer rather to be alone than attended by such a d——d coward as you have shown yourself,' and so we separated.

"From the equatorial regions, after capturing one or two smaller prizes, we cruised northward off the West India Islands. We shifted about here for several days, until early one morning we discovered a fleet composed of several ships, yet at the distance they were from us, we could not discern their number. They were steering directly toward us and bore every evidence, as they afterwards proved to be, of being a fleet of the British line. We endeavored to make our escape by flight. They gave us chase and followed in hot pursuit until past midday. During their pursuit when they had gained upon us so much as to be within cannon range, they gave us occasional shots from the bow or gunwale of the ship, though without much injury to our ship or crew. One of these shots however, took off both legs, close to the body, of a man who stood next to me, on my left hand, and at the same instant a splinter from the side of the vessel struck my foot and benumbed my whole leg, from which I suffered much. The fleet neared us and it being satisfactorily determined that it was a British fleet consisting of fourteen ships, five of which were larger than our own, and all hope of escape being abandoned, we concluded to surrender. We were divided among the ships of the enemy, being about twenty persons to each. We were well treated while in this situation. The fleet directed its course to New York city, where we were all put on board the "*Old Jersey*," the notorious British prison ship, then lying up East river, above the city, and entirely without rigging.

"We had been cruising about three months when we were captured. Our sufferings while confined in this old hull of a ship were unaccountably severe, and many of our number perished on account of the stench, the damp, deathly atmosphere in which we were confined, and the miserable food which was furnished us whereby to support life.

"It may not be uninteresting to know of what our fare consisted and what humanity is capable of enduring, when controlled by the force of necessity. The account is brief, but heart-sickening. Bread was a constant part of our ration and the chief source of our nutriment. It came to our hands in any but a palatable condition. The loaves were badly eaten by insects and then abandoned by them, or well inhabited by vermin on their reception by us. Portions of it appeared very much like honey-comb, filled with the dry refuse matter of worms. What was not in this con-



dition was very full, I had almost said literally alive, with insects, insomuch that it was impossible for us to get them all out, and we were obliged consequently to devour these animated communities, these bee-hives of activity, or be reduced to the utmost of wretchedness and starvation, the worst of deaths, that of famine. Besides our bread we had pease twice a week. When the day came in which we were to have boiled pease, the steward would put about two bushels into a large kettle with a quantity of water and boil them. I have stood by the side of this kettle while its contents were becoming heated, and have seen yellow worms rise to the surface in large quantities, and as the water became more and more heated, they would gather into large clusters, swim upon the surface during the entire process of boiling, affording the only seasoning or condiment to our repast. I have often found these bunches in my own mess. Many times it was with difficulty that I could prevent nausea. It was under these circumstances that I was induced, indeed, almost compelled to use tobacco, and this is now my best apology for acquiring this habit, as it has followed me ever since.

"During the latter part of the time of my imprisonment I had the small pox, but began to recover before arrangements were made for our exchange. I was a prisoner aboard the "Old Jersey" about six months. We were exchanged, conveyed, and set off, some time in December, on the coast of Rhode Island. I remember this fact in relation to time from this circumstance, that it was Thanksgiving time, and the first of sleighing. I was not well when I was set off, not having entirely recovered from the small pox. I could not walk more than five or six miles per diem. Occasionally I had an opportunity to ride a few miles.

"When coming through the streets of Providence on a cold, stormy day, with nothing to protect my feet from the snow, ice and water which then filled them, but some old scuffs, that were not worthy the name of shoes, a gentleman, observing my condition, hailed me and inquired the cause of my destitution, whence I came and whither I was going.

"I told him briefly what circumstances had brought me to this condition. He assured me that my shoes were good for nothing, were utterly unfit to wear, and directed me to go into a small grocery or huckster shop near by, and remain there until he should return with some shoes for me. I entered as he directed and there found six or eight young men lounging or apparently without any business. They gazed upon me somewhat intently noticed my ragged and tattered garments, and soon began to manifest no little interest to know what had subjected me to so forlorn and destitute condition.

"To them also I narrated some of the leading incidents of my life. Excited by pity at seeing me ragged, shoeless and shivering with cold, they gave me a "bitter," a little luncheon and contributed about a dollar in money to procure me food when I could not

beg, or might be turned away without alms. At this point of my interview with the young men the gentleman before mentioned returned with a pair of shoes, a pair of socks and some bread and cheese, all which he presented to me, accompanied with the most cheering language, and expressing a strong hope that I might be sustained and prospered in the remainder of my journey and in a few more days reach my home and friends, we parted. I felt encouraged and renewed my journey with a more elastic step and a lighter heart.

"I commonly stopped at houses such as gave evidence of thrift and wealth, being less likely to be turned away from such places than from the beggarly, poor appearing homes. I was obliged to beg my food and shelter nearly the whole of the way. I recollect calling at one house, a kind of tavern or "way-house," at night for the purpose of getting shelter for the night. I went into the kitchen and made known my poverty to the landlady, and asked that she would permit me to lodge upon the floor by the fire. She told me she thought I could be thus accommodated though her husband was then absent and might on his return be unwilling I should remain. He came late in the evening, had apparently been drinking and was very cross. He asked me what I was there for and told me he would not have me in his house. Said he, 'you have the small pox, you must leave, you cannot remain here.' I entreated him not to drive me from his house, leaving me at that hour of the night to the mercy of the cold, bleak winds of December. But my appeal was in vain. Finally, however, at my earnest solicitation he gave me a permit to lie in his horsebarn, and thus I passed the night. His allusion to my having the small-pox, was because that it was plain to be perceived, on account of want and much exposure to cold, that I had recently had that disease, though at that time there was no danger to be apprehended from it. However it served as a pretext for driving me from his house. In the morning, after sleeping in his barn, he gave me some "bit-ter." One man carried me several miles on my journey, and generally I was treated very well.

"I remained at home, being in poor health, through the three winter months, and then entered the *military service* in the Revolution, early in the spring of 1782. I enlisted for the town of Malden for three years, under Capt. Wait. Before entering the ranks in the field, I went to Boston and served as waiter to Lieut. Thomas Robinson, who was clerk to the muster-master. I remained here three or four weeks, when I went with twenty-five or thirty others to near West Point, on the Hudson River, and joined the 10th Massachusetts Regiment. The 10th wore British coats and was commanded by Col. Tupper. I was in Capt. Dix's company. We went to Verplank's Point, lay there sometime, then went to Morrison, or a place of some such name, and remained about a month. Soon after the 9th and 10th regiments "ranged out" or broke up, and I entered the 5th regiment, commanded by Col. Michael Jack-

son, under Capt. Cogswell. A Grenadier company was formed of the tallest and stoutest men. I had the offer to join, but did not, and was obliged to join another company. The Grenadier company was formed at Newburgh Huts and remained there till after the news of peace.

"When the news of peace came, our huts or camp was knee deep in snow, but we celebrated the event with raising of flags and with guns and music. Then all regiments broke up and one was formed called the American Regiment of young men, consisting of six or seven hundred, under Col. Henry Jackson. I was assigned to Capt. Williams' company, my term of enlistment not having expired, and we remained at Newburgh Huts till winter, and was then ordered to old Springfield, Mass. Capt. Williams' company then numbered about sixty. I remained at Springfield till I got my discharge, which was the last of June or first of July. The whole company were discharged at the same time. My discharge was made out in New York, and was signed by Col. Henry Jackson."

After thus serving the greater part of two years in the Revolutionary army, young Robinson returned, with his brothers, to his native Lexington. Here he remained in honest toil, till the spring of 1788, when he removed and settled at South Reading, as above stated.

The hardships of his service during the Revolutionary war, and the fact that he was early in life left an orphan and had to labor hard for his own livelihood, schooled him well for the hardships of his early settlement in this town. What to most men would seem insurmountable obstacles, were often easily encountered by him and regarded as trivial. It was a favorite remark of his that, if you wished to accomplish anything difficult or laborious, you should always say, "Come, boys," and not "go, boys." He believed that success in any calling of life consisted mainly in a good, vigorous, personal leadership of the person to be benefited.

Here, on his productive, well-tilled farm, he spent a long life of usefulness and activity and reared a large family of children, and like many of those old revolutionary pensioners, he was always in his old age healthy and hearty, remarkably vigorous both in mind and body, even to his last brief sickness. Long will his grandchildren remember those grand old Thanksgiving days, and the good cheer and the jolly times enjoyed around his festive table and cheerful fireside. A few years before his death, after a residence in this town of nearly seventy years, he again re-visited the scenes of his childhood in Lexington. It was a visit of sad and lonely interest to him. Of all his former large circle of early relatives, friends and acquaintances, he found only two survivors and they were much broken down with age. Yet his visit to those places of historical and local interest, he seemed to enjoy with peculiar zest.

His death occurred on the 31st day of October, 1857, at the age of nearly ninety-three years. Less than two weeks before his



death, he related in detail the above history to the writer of this sketch and recounted, with wonderful memory and great animation and zeal, the various vicissitudes and hardships of his long life.

His veneration for Washington, the Father of our country, was very great, and it was ever his pride that he was once a member of a company that temporarily acted as a body guard to their noble commander.

It was one of his latest remarks, that during the sixty-six years he had lived with the wife of his choice, in that house and upon that farm, he had lived in contentment and happiness, and had never in his life wished to change his lot for that of any other, nor his home for that which any other country or clime could afford. He seemed happy in the society of his numerous posterity and had the satisfaction of seeing them generally prosperous. He had little or no education in early life except that acquired in the army and by his later experience, yet he could, in his old age, cast up the amount due on promissory notes given at annual interest, with difficult partial payments endorsed thereon, and make a written statement of the same, with an accuracy and dispatch that might well put to shame many of the liberally educated young men of the present day. He learned to write while in the Continental army, by copying the ballads and camp-songs of the soldiers, one of which is now in the possession of, and highly prized by the writer of this sketch.

As a citizen, he was always upright and exact in all his dealings, and dignified, though generous and cordial in his intercourse. He was never an office-seeking politician, but held many positions of honor and trust, both civil and military, and always proved himself worthy of the confidence reposed in him. He was one of the earliest representatives of his town in the State Legislature. He was public spirited and a patron of noble enterprise. The bell in the steeple of the church at South Reading was his gift to the people of that village. He was ever a stern lover of justice. He remarked to the writer of this, at his last interview with him, that he had made it a principle during his life, "ever to do right" and to cause right to be done. He was a devoted patriot and had personally attended the polls of every Presidential election up to the time of his death, casting his last ballot for Fremont in 1856.

Thus have passed away all of these revolutionary patriots. None remain to testify of their early hardships and struggles for Freedom. Through their labors and sufferings we inherit this, our fair land, and these, our free institutions.

Truly do their memory and their courage deserve our highest veneration and respect, and if thus their memories are revered by their posterity, they will not, of necessity, need any lofty monuments or deeply wrought inscription to tell us of their noble deeds, their devoted patriotism and true greatness. However lowly may be their resting-place, let these tributes ever be ascribed to their



memories with grateful hearts. May it truly be said of them, that:—

“The joy  
With which their children tread the hallowed ground  
That holds their venerated bones, the peace  
That smiles on all they fought for, and the wealth  
That clothes the land they received,—these, though mute  
As feeling ever is when deepest —these  
Are monuments more lasting than the tombs  
Reared to the kings and demi-gods of old.”

## CHAPTER XII.—DEA. NATHANIEL PRATT.\*

BY LEVI W. CARLTON, OF WOODSTOCK, VT.

Nathaniel Pratt was born in Reading, Mass., Nov. 22d, 1749. Of his early boyhood we know nothing definitely, farther than that he was born of respectable parents, and enjoyed such advantages for an education, as were accessible to farmers' boys in that community, at that time. He was married to Lydia Mason, June 10th, 1773, and probably settled in New Ipswich, N. H. immediately after marriage. He first saw the country in which he ultimately settled, on his way to Ticonderoga, as a volunteer in the Revolutionary war. Having come to No. 4, (Charlestown, N. H.,) the company followed the Indian trail up the Black River to the twenty-mile stream, thence over the mountain. As Mr. Pratt, who was a tall and very slim man, came on the ground where the company were being mustered in, a couple of large, heavy men noticed his frail appearance, and one of them remarked to the other, “we shall have to carry *him* on our backs before we get through,” but Pratt very soon took the lead, and his heavy companions were forced to acknowledge that they could not keep up.

Dea. Pratt moved his family, (wife, five children and wife's mother,) to Reading Vt., early in the spring of 1783. He came up the fall before and “pitched” his land, a thousand acres, made a clearing, and we think that he built the log house. We do not know upon what conditions he purchased his land, or what he realized for what he sold; we think that he never attempted to improve but about one hundred and fifty acres.

His history as a farmer is the simple story of the pioneer; hewing a farm out of the wilderness, clearing land, erecting buildings, making fences, planting orchards, and all done when mills were far away, produce low, and money very scarce. Four children were born after they moved to Reading, two in the log house, and two in the framed house, and as the second child was born in 1788 and the third child in 1791, the framed house must have been built between those two periods. There was a sawmill built in

\* Nathaniel Pratt was the sixth in descent from the original ancestor, from the southern part of England, John Pratt, who was made freeman in Dorchester, Mass., May 4, 1632. His grandson, John Pratt, 3d, settled in Reading, Mass., and was the great grandfather of Nathaniel.

town in 1780, but the pine boards with which that house was ceiled were hauled from Windsor street; the common boards were doubtless procured in town.

Dea. Pratt commenced the manufacture of ropes from the hemp and flax that he raised on his farm at an early period, we think as soon as he was able to procure the necessary machinery, and this he followed as long as he lived. For the few last years of his life he took but little interest in the farm work except the growing of the flax and hemp. This he "got out," dressed in the winter, and in the spring made up his cords and ropes. He made from a fish-line, to a rope large enough "to haul an ox into the swing." For the durability of his ropes, it can be said that there are now bed cords in existence, of his make, that have been constantly used since they were purchased of him. The rope trade was about his only source of income, and with it, he provided himself and family with many necessities and comforts, of which he was a liberal dispenser according to his means. The culture of flax and hemp was exhaustive to the soil, and many loads of manure were eaten up by that crop and sold off from the farm, that ought to have been kept upon it to have kept up its fertility. It was "nominated in the bond" that his son-in-law, (Luther Carlton) gave to him that "he should have the use of a piece of land east of the Cider Mill house, three rods wide, and ten rods long, and that five loads of good stable manure should be put upon it annually." This was for the growing of hemp.

It is as a christian, that the life and character of Dea. Pratt must be presented, if it is presented at all in a manner to be known and appreciated, for in this was his life, the center of all his hopes, the end of all his labors. We do not know at what period of his life he embraced christianity, but doubtless in his boyhood. To him religion was a great and terrible reality, its laws and teachings were primary, every thing else secondary. Upon its altar he consecrated *himself and all that he had*. As a practical christian he was a Puritan of the Puritans. He was strict in the keeping of the Sabbath-day, and punctilious in his observance of all the ordinances of the church. On the Sabbath he arose early, ate a light breakfast, then spent the morning hours in reading the Bible, religious books and tracts and in family devotion. He attended meeting almost regardless of the weather or the condition of the roads. In the winter he has been known to start with a team and some of his family, find the road impassable, turn around, go home put up his team, and take his cane and walk briskly off to church two miles and a half, through drifts and bluster. When he returned he gave his family a brief history of the sermons he had heard and spent the evening as he had spent the morning. His necessary chores were done in the quickest manner, and nothing in the conduct of his family that savored of recreation, or relaxation was allowed, not even conversation upon secular matters. In his own estimation he would have been remiss in duty as a chris-

tian, and as a parent, if he had permitted those who were under his control to pollute its sanctity. He kept Saturday evening not as holy time, but as preparatory to the Sabbath. The many stories that were told of him such as, "that he whipped the beer barrel because the beer *worked* on the Sabbath day, but finding that such correction did no good, forbade the women-folks to brew on Saturday," were of course fabrications, but his views of the sanctity of that day were well enough known in the neighborhood to give currency and point to them.

He took a deep interest in the building of churches at home and the spreading of the gospel in foreign lands, and gave of his means liberally to both objects. His home was the home of the minister, the missionary and the colporteur, and many were the evening meetings that were held there.

Although living in a day when temperance lectures, societies, and literature were almost unknown, he entirely discarded the use of intoxicating liquor as a beverage, and became so disgusted with its effects, that in his last years he was unwilling to use it even as a medicine, and in his last hours he exacted a promise from his daughter with whom he lived, that none should be used at his funeral.

We have never heard it asserted that his daily walk and conversation did not correspond to his profession, as well as those of any man who held as stern a creed.

Dea. Pratt had his playful side, and enjoyed a joke greatly. He had what the phrenologist would call "very large mirthfulness." If he found a bumblebees' or a wasps' nest in haying time he was never known to try to keep the dog away from it. It was a favorite sport of his, when he was spinning a cord or twisting a rope, if the dog attempted to run under it, to let his rope slack down and twist the dog's hair into it, and he has been known to very carefully fasten his cord into the hair of imprudent little girls who attempted to run under it. Of course these were the sports of his younger years. As he grew older he grew less playful and more serious, but his mirthfulness was inherent in him, and scarcely less active than his veneration.

His last years were mostly spent in reading, visiting the sick, and attending meetings. He made it an object to visit every person in town with whom he was acquainted, if they were sick. He had ever been very punctual to attend all the week day meetings of the church, but in his latter years he attended nearly all the meetings that were held anywhere near his dwelling, and he often remarked that "he hoped that the last place that he went to, would be to meeting, or to visit the sick," and it was; he died after a short illness, April 4th, 1831.

The Rev. Abram Marsh was then the settled minister. He left soon after Dea. Pratt's death, the church rapidly diminished, even to extinction, and from that day to this, it has been an uncommon occurrence for a Congregational minister to preach in town.



In closing this history of Dea. Pratt, we feel that it would be unjust and ungenerous not to say one word of her who was the companion of all his labors, his joys, and his sorrows. Lydia Mason Pratt\* was a sterling woman, she was persevering in industry, kind of heart, generous of nature, and indomitable of will; she had all the sternness of her husband without any of his playfulness. All of life to her was a serious reality, yet she was always social, cheerful and hopeful. Her last thoughts that were expressed in words were of the writer hereof, and it is in affectionate remembrance that this simple tribute is offered.

NOTE.—Children and grand children of Nathaniel and Lydia Pratt: Charles M. married 1st Patty Stanly, of Reading. 2d, Melinda Cushing of Bridport, Vt. Children by first marriage, Nathaniel M., Jonas S., Anna, Charles, Lucy, Harriet, Laura, Ruth and Rebecca; by second marriage, Jason, Luther C. and Hannah.

Lydia married, 1st, Elihu Harrison, 2d, Moses Nutting, both of Reading. Children by first marriage, Mehitable and China; by second marriage, Arvilla, John W., Lydia and Laura.

Nathaniel married Sally Swain, of Reading. Children, Jarvis, Sarah, Mary, Linas and Lucy. Mehitable married Isaac Sherwin, of Reading. Children, Phila, Louisa, James L. and Sardinie P.

Betsey married Reuben Fletcher of Plymouth Vt. Children, Stilman, Sumner, Anna P., Thomas S., Ruthy R., Sarah A., Henry P., Dorcas M. and Aaron P.

Dorcas never was married

Hannah married Josiah Hawley of Windsor, Vt. Child, Nathaniel P

Anna married Luther Carlton of Reading. Children, Emma L. and Levi W.

There were present at the Centennial celebration of Reading, of the lineal descendants of Dea. Pratt, thirteen grand children, twenty-three great-grandchildren, eleven great-great-grandchildren, and one great-great-great-grandchild.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### EDUCATIONAL AFFAIRS AND EMINENT SONS OF READING.

The common school has existed in Reading from the time of the organization of the town. The early school houses were built of logs and equalled the dwellings of those days in comfort and convenience. The early school master, physically if not mentally qualified, ruled with the rod and ferule. There being no examination required, the committee drove as sharp a trade as possible with the applicant for the position of teacher, *cheapness* being the main consideration. The teacher's stock of knowledge being scanty, the pupil was not urged and stimulated by example and precept to strive for the mastery of more than the most elementary studies. Reading, spelling, writing and ciphering embraced the whole curriculum of studies. To these have been added other branches, and a more extensive and thorough knowledge required of the former, under the enlightened growth of public sentiment. The law requiring examinations of teachers, has elevated the standard of qualifications required of the instructors, and gradually secured to the children of the public schools very many of the advantages which were, at an early day, accessible to them only in

\* Her father, Charles Mason, of Lynn End, Mass., died at Halfmoon, near Albany, N. Y., in 1750, a volunteer in the army of the Colonies in the old French war. Her mother's maiden name was Townsend, a sister of Daniel Townsend, who was killed by the British soldiers at Menotomy, Mass. April 19, 1775, and of Thomas Townsend, father of Aaron, William and Thomas, early settlers of Reading Vt.



the academy. There have, also, been vast improvements in the text books used in the public schools, not only keeping pace with new discoveries in geographical researches, in the sciences and mechanic arts, but placing before the pupils the results of the ripened experience and intelligent labors of a large class of professional teachers. With all these advantages the future must determine their influence on the mental growth and strength of the present generation of scholars in the public schools.

The day for developing great minds in the chimney corner by the glare of the lighted pine knot has gone into history. The boy of to-day is placed in the school room, surrounded by many of the modern appliances, and if not filled with ambition, must charge to his own indifference and negligence, his failures in life. "Intelligence is a primary ingredient in the wealth of Nations." Knowledge and abundance sustain to each other the relation of cause and effect. The extremely poor, the criminals, the scum of society are generally found to be ignorant, thoughtless and lazy; and these are potent reasons for the upholding and development of the common school system.

Keeping pace with the advance in the range of studies and the qualifications required of instructors, has been an improvement in the condition of the school houses. The school house in No. 2 Sawyer District) is nearly new, is convenient, well ventilated and provided with a bell, the gift of Benj. Sawyer, and with a library of some 200 volumes, the gift of Rev. T. J. Sawyer. The school house in No. 8, (South Reading) was re-modeled in 1873, provided with modern style seats and desks for the pupils, with clock, thermometer, ample ventilation, and with a handsome teacher's chair presented by James O. Whitten of Peabody, Mass.

The Felchville District have a large school house, and a school of two grades. The school rooms are very respectably fitted up. With two exceptions the other school houses in town are convenient and reasonably adapted to the health and comfort of the pupils.

The late Chief Justice Chase was at one time a teacher of a public school in Dist. No. 7 in Reading, and many of his pupils are yet living and remember him as a tall and awkward young man, then a student in Dartmouth College.

Very many other men who have become eminent in business or professional life have been teachers in the public schools of Reading.

The Town Superintendents of schools since 1852, [the names of those prior to that date not being accessible to the editor] have been Frank M. Robinson, now of Dubuque, Iowa, 1853 '54 '55 '56; James P. Osborne, M. D., 1857; Merritt E. Goddard, 1859 and 1860; Charles C. Buck, 1861 and 1862; Rev. Rob't. G. Johnson, 1863; Henry M. Taylor, 1864 '65; Rev. C. H. Richardson, 1866; Orlando W. Sherwin, M. D., 1867 and '68; Silas W. Pike, 1869 and 1870; Rev. Joseph Barber, latter part of 1870; Gilbert A. Davis, 1871, '72 and '73.

Thanks to the educational advantages of the town, that very many of the sons and daughters of Reading have become eminent in the learned professions and thus honored their native town. The lists subjoined are made as complete as possible, from the materials accessible to the editor.

## ATTORNEYS—NATIVES OF READING.

|                     |              |                             |
|---------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|
| John L. Buck,       | practiced at | Lockport, N. Y.             |
| Lysander M. Davis,  | " "          | Pine Hill. Wilcox Co., Ala. |
| Josiah Q. Hawkins,  | " "          | Brandon, Vt.                |
| Calvin L. Robinson, | " "          | Jacksonville, Fla.          |
| Frank M. Robinson,  | " "          | Dubuque, Iowa.              |
| Geo. O. Robinson,   | " "          | Detroit, Mich.              |
| John York Sawyer,   | " "          | Edwardsville, Ill.          |
| Seth T. Sawyer,     | " "          |                             |
| Elwyn M. Stearns,   | " "          | Manchester, Iowa.           |
| John M. Stearns,    | " "          | Brooklyn, N. Y.             |
| Oscar Stearns,      | " "          | Brooklyn, N. Y.             |
| Wm. Watkins,        | " "          | Towanda, Penn.              |

## CLERGYMEN—NATIVES OF READING.

|                      |                       |                              |
|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| Daniel Ackley,       | Universalist,         | Perry, Wyoming<br>Co., N. Y. |
| Ira Allen,           |                       | Potsdam, N. Y.               |
| Richard Amsden,      | Methodist Episcopal.  | Missouri.                    |
| Daniel Bowen,        | Baptist.              |                              |
| Daniel Davis,        | Methodist Episcopal.  |                              |
| Samuel A. Davis,     | Universalist,         | Hartford, Conn.              |
| Uriel Fay,           | Methodist Episcopal.  |                              |
| Marcellus Herrick,   | Episcopalian,         | Woodstock, Vt.               |
| — Hunt               | Methodist.            |                              |
| Jeremiah Johnson,    | Methodist Protestant. |                              |
| Lorenzo Johnson,     | Methodist Episcopal.  |                              |
| Wm. Townshend,       | Methodist,            | Louisiana.                   |
| T. J. Sawyer, D. D., | Universalist,         | College Hill, Mass.          |
| Nathan Sawyer,       |                       |                              |
| B. P. Stone, D. D.,  | Congregationalist,    | Concord, N. H.               |
| Josiah Wetherbee,    | Free-Will Baptist,    | Sandwich, N. H.              |
| Lorenzo White,       | Congregationalist.    |                              |
| Robert White,        | Methodist Protestant. |                              |

## DENTISTS.

|                               |              |                |
|-------------------------------|--------------|----------------|
| Marcellus Newton, D. D. S.,   | practiced at | Woodstock, Vt. |
| Isaac J. Wetherbee, D. D. S., | " "          | Boston, Mass.  |

## PHYSICIANS.

|                         |              |                   |
|-------------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| Marcellus Bowen, M. D., | practiced at | So. Boston, Mass. |
| — Brown, M. D.          |              |                   |
| L. D. Harlow, M. D.,    | " "          | Philadelphia.     |

|                         |   |   |                                       |
|-------------------------|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| Geo. W. Stearns, M. D., | “ | “ | New Bedford, Mass.                    |
| Marcus Swain, M. D.,    | “ | “ | Essex, Vt. & Englewood, Ill.          |
| Oliver Swain, M. D.,    | “ | “ | Colchester, Vt.                       |
| James Wardner, M. D.,   | “ | “ | Reading, Vt. and<br>Plainfield, N. H. |

## EDITORS.

John M. Stearns, Esq., now of Brooklyn, N. Y., in Nov. 1838, commenced at Montpelier, the publication of a monthly magazine entitled the “*Green Mountain Emporium and Literary, Moral and Religious Record.*” We quote from its prospectus.

“It is generally supposed that literature must be confined to cities, and flourish only amidst the banishments of wealth and fashion, as if genius disdained to spread out the charms of her soul-stirring imagery amid the luxury of nature’s scenery. The absurdity of this impression is seen from the fact, that a large proportion of the literary journals of our cities, are made up of contributions from the country; and most of the scenes of their descriptions are laid amongst its rocks, valleys, landscapes and wild recesses.”

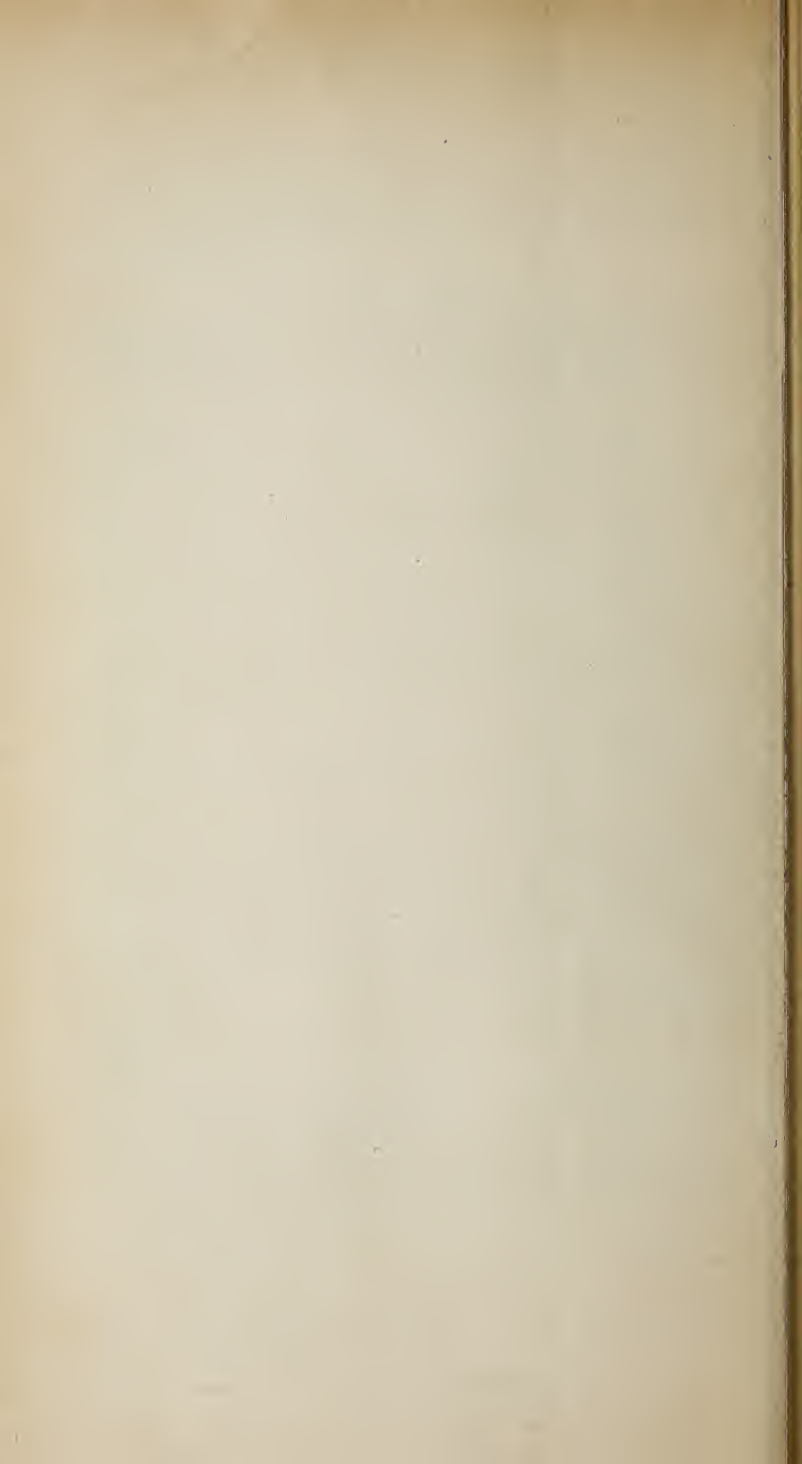
“The child may be charmed with a bouquet of silk and paper flowers, but delicate and refined sensibility of mind, admires the lone violet of the mountain glen. It is believed that among the three hundred thousand people of Vermont, there are a sufficient number of correct taste and sound moral principle, to give liberal encouragement to a literary journal, that in its spirit shall come somewhat to the circumstances of the country; though it may want the voluptuous livery of city gayety.”

The literary character of this Magazine was of a high order, but its publication was not continued for any great length of time. Mr. Stearns subsequently published a weekly newspaper at Middlebury, Vt., and in 1846, Edward Walker, 144 Fulton Street, N. Y., published a handsomely bound volume of 276 pages, written by Mr. Stearns, entitled “*The Wreath of Wild Flowers, from the Literary Miscellanies of John Milton Stearns.*”

Albert N. Swain, of the “*Bellows Falls Times.*” [See Swain, Part III.]

Simeon Ide, the well known Editor and Publisher of Claremont, N. H., spent many years of his boyhood in Reading.

Rev. T. J. Sawyer, D. D., has wielded the editorial pen of the *Christian Messenger*, and subsequently had the same connection with the *Christian Ambassador*, both published in New York City.





## PART THIRD.

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### HISTORY OF READING.

#### PERSONAL AND FAMILY RECOLLECTIONS.

The editor has designed in Part III to give the name and business of every resident citizen of Reading on the first day of January, 1874, and to this has been added the name of his wife, (when known to the editor) and in some cases the names of other members of the family. No family record has been omitted, if the necessary data have been placed in the editor's hands. In addition to the names of resident citizens, will be found brief sketches of many of the former residents of the town. The editor expressly disclaims any intention to omit any person's name coming within the foregoing classes. Names mentioned in former Parts of this work have not, ordinarily, been repeated in this Part.

Ainsworth, J. S. farmer, m.

Abbott, Ebenezer came to Reading in 1809 and served an apprenticeship as a clothier with Levi Bailey.

Abbott, W. M. C. farmer, m. Melvina Parkhurst.

Adams, John, stone-mason, m. Paulina Leavens, built the stone churches at South Reading, Cavendish and Chester, and many other stone buildings.

#### JOHN ALLEN AND HIS DESCENDANTS.

John Allen, a native of Waltham, Mass., was born in 1749. He became embarrassed in business at Waltham and came to Reading in 1788 or '9, first settling on a tract of about 30 acres a little south of the "Ladd place," his first domicile being a shanty covered with bark. The year following he moved to the place now owned by John Foley and continued to live there until his death in 1824. He was noted for his immense muscular power. He left two sons, Joseph and Ira, both born in Reading. Ira became a minister of

the Gospel, commencing to preach about 1815 and continued to preach nearly every Sunday for 45 years. He moved to Potsdam, N. Y., in 1822, settled on a farm which he continued to cultivate, in connection with his preaching, until his death.

Joseph occupied the old homestead in Reading until his death in May 1851. He left three children, Albert, farmer, living on the next place north, married Eliza M. E. Cady; Lanora, who married John Foley living on the old homestead; Jonas Galusha, who married Aurilla Whitmore and lived on the next place south, and Lestina, who married Charles Maynard.

Jonas Galusha Allen, son of Joseph Allen, was a noted violinist, and an eminent musician. His compositions were simple and plaintive, but pleasing to hear. None of his music was ever published, yet many of his contra dances, and waltzes became favorites with other musicians. He never put names to his pieces, but some by common consent have taken names, they being so completely suited to certain dances, as "Pat and Nelly," "Allen's Hornpipe," "Farmer's Reel," "Amsden's Favorite," and "Lynden Waltzes." He was leader of a stringed band for nearly thirty years, and as a musician, he was an honor to his profession. He was by trade, a house carpenter.

Always upright and honorable, faithful to meet engagements, a good neighbor, amiable in disposition and pleasing in manners; he won the respect of all who knew him. He died March 20th, 1868, at the age of 55 years. He left one child; a son, Theo. J. Allen, a very promising musician and performer of rare skill and taste on the cornet. Willie Foley, also, has the musical talents of the Allens.

Allard, Uriah, farmer, m.

Allen, Henry, mechanic, m. Abbie Meachem.

Allen, Ethan A., mechanic.

#### ABEL AMSDEN.

Abel Amsden came from Marlboro, Mass. His first *pitch* in Reading was of 50 acres, July 3, 1787, and on this land he passed the remainder of his days. He had served four years in the Revolutionary army and was engaged in some of the fiercest battles, receiving an honorable discharge and his pay in continental currency, at that time and subsequently so much depreciated that when on his way to Vermont he paid for a dinner of corn bread and milk \$70 of this currency, the landlord did not consider it an equivalent for the dinner. His first log house was built near the red part of the house now owned by Orville D. Amsden. His father, Abram Amsden, came with him and died in town. Abel's privations and hardships in clearing up his farm were severe, but his iron will and hardy constitution carried him successfully through them all and he became a large land owner and quite wealthy for those days. He built the brick tavern and for a long time was the popular proprietor. He was a strong Universalist in

his religious belief, and the first sermon preached in Reading, by Rev. S. C. Loveland, was delivered in his tavern hall.

He built a grist mill and carding works in 1821; these were destroyed by fire. He died in 1828, aged 71 years. He had sixteen children, ten of whom survived him, and all are now dead, except two daughters, Mrs. Sally Hapgood and Mrs. Charlotte Hawkins.

His children were Polly, b. Apr. 5, 1781; Sally, b. Apr. 19, 1783; Abel, b. Feb. 21, 1785; Eliphlet, b. Jan. 13, 1787; Asa, b. Feb. 4, 1789; Betsey, b. Aug. 18, 1791; Clarissa, b. Dec. 12, 1794; America, b. June 22, 1796; Luia, b. May 28, 1801; Livia, b. June 27, 1803; Napoleon, b. Jan. 24, 1806; Charlotte L. b. Mar. 20, 1814.



AMERICA AMSDEN.

America Amsden, son of Abel, was a native of Reading and spent there the early years of his life, but subsequently was a farmer in West Windsor. He possessed a genial disposition, making his society agreeable, and discharged faithfully and creditably all the duties of an American citizen. He was accidentally drowned at the time of the great freshet Oct. 4, 1869. His widow and two sons survive him. His sons, Rollin C. Amsden of Windsor and Charles Amsden of Weathersfield, are among the most enterprising and successful business men of the state.

Rollin in 1873 built an expensive brick block in Windsor village, and is an extensive dealer in lumber and grain.

Charles is largely engaged in the manufacture of lime and lumber and dealer in grain and general merchandise, and is the owner of a village known as Amsden's Mills.

Amsden, Orville D. farmer, m.

Austin, Henry, farmer, m. Mrs. Susan Dodge.

Bailey, Leonard, farmer, m. Mary Thomas.

Bailey, Wm. W. farmer, m. Frances Lull.

Baldwin, Otis, merchant, m. Sarah Rice.

Barnes, Lewis, farmer, m.

Bates, Zacheus, manufacturer of chairs, m. Charlotte T. White.

Belknap, Nahum, basket maker, m. Betsey Noyes.

Bement, Wm. C. farmer, selectman, m.

Benjamin, Harvey, a musician of talent and reputation and a popular singer.

Bisbee, Marvin, stage driver, m.

Bixby, James A. farmer, m.

Bliss, Charles H. mechanic, m.

Brink, Oliver, farmer.

Bryant, Carlos, farmer, m.

Bryant, James, farmer, m.

Bryant, Henry, farmer, m. — Henry.

Bryant, Marcellus, farmer, lister, m. — Spear.

Buchanan, David, farmer m. Mary Parker.

#### GEO. H. BUCK

was b. at Reading, Jan. 2, 1824, m. Alzina Holmes, who d. Feb. 9, 1862. Their children were:

Martha, E. b. Jan. 28, m. Rufus F. Pierce.

Helen.

Walter, b. Feb. 19, 1850, m. Mary E. Weston, Aug. 31, 1873.

Byron, b. Aug. 4, 1852.

Eunice, b. Nov. 1858.

Caroll and Carrie, twins, b. May 15, 1860.

Mr. Buck, m. Marcia M. Gurney, June 19, 1869.

Buck, Simon M. farmer, m. Sarah Fuller, and now resides in the north west part of the town.

Butler, Alvah, L. cooper, m. Harriet Griswold by whom he has four children, Hiram D., Oliver B., Andrew J. and Marietta M.

#### LEVI BAILEY

came in 1790 from Hartland Vt., and settled on the "Hiram S. Fay farm," which he in part cleared up. In 1794 he in company with Geo. Betterley, purchased of Micah Holmes, Jr., for £100, the site of "Bailey's Mills," a dam and mill pond then existing, but Mr. B. soon became the sole owner. He was an active, enterprising man, built an oil mill in 1823, starch mill in 1831, the large brick building now standing, in 1835-37, and three different grist mills, besides the cloth-dressing mill. From the fall of 1812 to



1833, he was engaged at the Centre in mercantile business with the late Abel Gilson, Jr., under the style of Bailey & Gilson. His children were :

Samuel, who lives at the old place.

Sarah, m. S. C. Shedd.

Betsey, m. Joseph Shedd.

Rhoda, m. Asahel W. Warren of Weathersfield, Vt.

Pluma, m. Benj. Kimball, of Mo.

Thusa, m. Oliver Holmes of Mo.

Of Samuel's children, George m. Albila Shedd, and resides at the old homestead.

Orville, Ransom and Samuel reside at Baileyville, Ogle Co., Illinois, and are extensive farmers and dealers in grain.

Cady, Jefferson, m. Fanny Burnham. Their children are :

Gustavus A.

Eliza M. E. m. Albert Allen.

Charles H. m. Aug. 13, 1867, — Grant.

#### CAPTAIN DAVID BURNHAM

came from Duxbury, N. H. prior to 1786 and in that year opened at the Centre the first tavern in Reading. He was a public spirited citizen and for many years kept a much frequented public house.

He was b. Dec. 3, 1757, and d. Oct. 16, 1834. He m. Abigail Persons, Aug. 7, 1780. She d. Nov. 11, 1797. Their children were :

Betsey, b. March 5, 1781, d. January 17, 1828.

Nabby, b. June 15, 1783, m. Edmond Page, Dec. 6, 1801.

Sally, b. April 2, 1786, m. Jona. Page, March 7, 1804.

John P., b. May 7, 1792, d. Aug. 7, 1871, m. Deborah Randall, Nov. 7, 1814.

Asa A., b. Aug. 3, 1795, m. Sabra G. Davis, March 18, 1840.

David Burnham m. Eliza Burns, June 4, 1800. Their children were :

Caroline, b. May 14, 1801, m. Oliver Ferry, Feb. 25, 1835.

Clarence, b. May 14, 1803, d. April 22, 1812.

Thomas F., b. Sept. 16, 1805, m. Eliza H. Page, March, 5, 1829.

Fanny, b. Aug. 27, 1807, m. Jefferson Cady, Oct. 11, 1827.

Lucinda, b. Oct. 16, 1820, m. Esek W. Adams, Aug. 16, 1831.



ASA A. BURNHAM, ESQ.

WRITTEN BY L. C. DAVIS, ESQ.

Mr. Burnham died May 17, 1872, at the residence of Esek W. Adams, Esq. his brother-in-law in Cavendish, aged 78 years. He was a native of Reading, and son of Capt. David Burnham. Few men possessed more energy and perseverance in early life. He was known throughout the country as a contractor and jobber, and many massive bridges still stand a monument to his labors in the summer season,—while his winters were spent with his men and teams, in the lumber regions near Lake Champlain. He often visited Brighton and Boston markets with his team, of four oxen, laden with the produce of his farm. He was an extensive owner and dealer in cattle and in real estate,—often buying large droves of cattle and shipping them to Brighton. But for many years his labors have been confined mostly to his farm, with the same persevering industry, till bending under the weight of years and other infirmities, tired nature at last must rest. He sought the aid of physicians in vain,—Saratoga's healing waters could not cure him, nor the sympathy of kind friends save him. But as he neared the Mystic River he felt that all was bright and beautiful beyond, and without a struggle he passed on to the golden shores of Immortality.

Mr. Burnham had two children,—David E., who occupies the home farm and succeeds to the extensive farming interests of his father, and Anna, who keeps an extensive and popular millinery establishment at Ludlow, Vt.

Burnham, Richard, farmer.

Burlingame, Henry, farmer.

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GEORGE M. CLARK.



- Cady, Azro, farmer.  
 Cady, Lyman, farmer, m. Jerusha Whitmore.  
 Cady, Jefferson, farmer, m. Fanny Burnham.  
 Carter, Rev. Ira, farmer, and clergyman of the Methodist E. Church.  
 Carter, Edmund H. merchant and teacher.  
 Cilley, Frederick, farmer, m. Jane Bixby.  
 Carlton, Freeman, farmer, m.  
 Chase, Caleb, farmer.  
 Chamberlin, Hiram, farmer, m. Mary Kendall.  
 Coburn, Orpheus, farmer, m. Mrs. Elizabeth Jones.  
 Coburn, Milton, farmer.  
 Coburn, Sylvester, farmer, m.  
 Coolidge, L. G. stage proprietor, m. Nancy Crossman, Sept. 17, 1848, at Andover, Vt. Their children are:  
 Ada.  
 Orin, farmer, m. Eliza Burbee.  
 Ella, m. Byron Bingham of Brandon, Vt.  
 Edgar, stage proprietor.  
 Ashbel and Isabel, twins.  
 Omeria and Omeron, twins.  
 Cook, Milo, B. farmer, m. — Whitmore.  
 Corey, Silas, dyer.  
 Corey, John S. mechanic.  
 Curley, Martin, shoe maker, m. Mary Conlin.  
 Curley, Thomas, student at Tuft's College, Mass.

## GEORGE M. CLARK

was born in Clarendon, Vt. in 1835, where he resided till his thirteenth year. His musical talents were developed at an early age and at the age of nine years he was a skilled player on the violin, and until he left Clarendon in the spring of 1850 he was the *fiddler* at all the country huskings, apple-parings, parties, &c., in that section of country.

In 1850, he came to Weathersfield and there spent the next four years of his life in going to school, working some and fiddling more. His advent to Felchville is dated in Dec. 1854, when he opened there a stone cutter's shop and the following August married Cornelia E. Paige of Weathersfield. She died in October, 1856, leaving surviving one son, Ed. H. Clark.

The marble working business not proving congenial to Mr. Clark's tastes, he abandoned that and became a teacher of country singing schools. Professionally these were *successful*, but financially *unsuccessful*.

In February, 1858, he married Lucinda A. Felch and became a farmer, and struggled with the "Widow Felch's farm," until the fall of 1859, when business engagements took him to Jacksonville, Florida. His musical talents were learned and appreciated by the citizens of that genial clime and he taught music, tuned pianos,

gave concerts, and led the Presbyterian choir in Jacksonville, from whom he received a gold lined silver cup. While in Florida he wrote several songs, among which were a serenade, "Moonlight is Beaming," that attained great popularity.

In 1860, commenced his more public life as a showman having then, in connection with O. A. Whitmore, started the company known as the "*Broadway Minstrels*," and with that class of business he was principally occupied until August, 1862, when he enlisted as a fifer in Co. E. of the 16th Vt. Vols., was promoted sergeant, then drum major, and 2d lieutenant and detailed as provost marshal on the staff of Gen. Geo. J. Stannard. He was in the battle of Gettysburg, and honorably mentioned in Gen. Stannard's official report of that engagement.

The years 1864 and 5, were spent in traveling the country with Whitmore and Thompson's Minstrels. In the spring of 1866, he started with E. P. Hardy and O. A. Whitmore, the company so well known as Whitmore & Clark's Minstrels. This company travelled the New England States, New York and the Provinces and everywhere were greeted with enthusiastic audiences. Their performances were high toned and chaste, and free from everything low and vulgar.

In 1867 Mr. Clark made his first appearance before the public as a clown in the United States circus. His ready wit, excellent imitative powers and musical abilities, here found full opportunity for display, and he has rapidly worked himself up to the front rank among this droll class of public caterers. He has since played the clown for J. M. French's Oriental Circus and Geo. F. Bailey's Circus and Menagerie and gained a national reputation.

Mr. Clark has written some twenty-five songs, both words and music, many of which have been published, copy-righted, and become well known and popular. Among these are "Annie's Grave," "Meet me Josie at the Gate," "Drifting with the Tide," "Give me the Man that is True to his Neighbor," &c. All his songs have been of a moral or sentimental character.

Mr. Clark has written much church music, some of which has been published, and nearly all of which has at times been rendered by the Union Choir at Felchville of which Mr. Clark has long been the leader.

Mr. Clark during the past winter has given public lectures at Felchville, Windsor, Proctorsville and Montpelier, upon "*The West*." These have drawn large and intelligent audiences and been highly commended by the Press. His great liberality has added hundreds of volumes to the Reading Library, of which he was an active founder.

MOSES CHAPLIN.

WRITTEN BY GEO. W. CHAPLIN OF RUTLAND, VT.

Moses Chaplin was born in New Rowley, Mass., June 22, 1760. He was a descendant of Hugh Chaplin and one of the fourth gen-

eration of that name who lived in that town, and who, with others, commenced the settlement of New Rowley, A. D. 1639, under the spiritual guidance of an eminent Puritan minister by the name of Rogers, from Rowley, Yorkshire, England. He was a cousin of the late Rev. Jeremiah Chaplin, D. D. formerly president of Waterville College, (Me.) and also of the late Rev. Daniel Chaplin, D. D. for many years pastor of the Congregational Church, Groton, Mass. His father, Ebenezer Chaplin, removed from New Rowley in an early day, to Groton, and his mother dying while he was quite young, he went to live with a sister in the town of Rindge, N. H., where under the control of an austere and tyrannical brother-in-law, he suffered many privations and hardships. At the age of sixteen years he entered the army of the Revolution, and was at Ticonderoga a short time before it was surrendered to the British forces and was also, at the taking of Gen. Burgoyne at Saratoga, in Oct. 1777. After several months service in the army he returned to Rindge, where he remained until he attained to his majority.

He was married to Mary, daughter of Abel Platts of Rindge, in August succeeding.

Soon after his marriage he in company with one Aaron Kimball left for Reading, Vermont, when after taking a cursory survey of the town he settled upon the farm until recently owned and occupied by the late Rufus Forbush. Kimball also purchased a homestead in the vicinity and they commenced to occupy their lands, exchanging work for the sake of company and for their mutual accommodation. It was here that they encountered those severe hardships and privations incident to the settlement of a new country, almost in its primeval state with few inhabitants and provisions scarce and dear. Their bread stuffs were chiefly procured from Windsor and Cornish, N. H., ten or twelve miles distant, and after being converted into meal were not unfrequently conveyed home upon their shoulders. At one time after having hoed corn all day for Gen. Chase at Cornish, each took a bundle of young apple trees and bore them home by moonlight twelve miles upon their backs. In the spring of the following year, 1782, Mr. Chaplin with his wife removed to Reading, and his constituted the ninth family in town, and there together they commenced the battle of life. Mr. Chaplin's residence in Reading extended through a period of twenty-six years, and where, too, his ten children were born, eight of whom attained to their majority. The sons were Moses Jr., Aaron, Asa, Daniel, and George W., the writer of this sketch. The daughters were Phebe, Rhoda and Nancy. Of these children two only survive: Nancy, (Mrs. McConnell,) aged 76 years, and George W., 69 nearly. Both reside in Rutland. Mr. Chaplin during his sojourn in Reading if we may regard the testimony of his townsmen, was active in his endeavors to promote the material interests and prosperity of the town. He was much in public business as the numerous documents now in the hands of the



writer would indicate. From these it appears that he held successively the office of constable and collector, town representative, and justice of the peace. He also served for a time as assessor and county collector.

His military record shows that he was commissioned as captain of the Seventh Regimental Company in Nov. 1794. He was Major in 1798, and as Colonel was in command of the 3d Regiment, 1st Brigade and 4th Division of Vermont Militia in the year 1800. During the winter of 1806-7, he sold his farm in Reading to Capt. Rufus Forbush then of Massachusetts, and in March following removed to Clarendon, Rutland county, where he sojourned many years following the occupation of farming, and where again he was elected to positions of responsibility and trust.

In January, A. D. 1825, Mary Chaplin, his wife, was attacked with bilious fever, and after a severe illness of four weeks died February 25th at the age of sixty-five years, leaving father and son alone as the remnant of the family. He died Nov. 18th, 1840, having lived to the advanced age of eighty years and five months. His religious convictions were of the liberal Faith, and he was a great admirer of the Elder Hosea Ballou who during his residence in Barnard, on several occasions held meetings at his house, in Reading. He was the tried friend of Republican Government, and the earnest advocate of equal rights among all men; hence his early protest against the institution of American slavery, viewing it as opposed to the genius of all political compacts where the will of the people is the law of the land. He was a man of generous impulses and labored assiduously for the promotion of peace and good order in society. To the poor and destitute he was liberal to a fault, often dispensing to others beyond his ability to bestow, in view of a safe and necessary economy. To his children he was a wise and faithful parent and counsellor, prompting them to cultivate habits of industry, honesty, moral uprightness and good faith in all their dealings with their fellow men.

Ezekiel Davis was one of the early settlers, and raised eleven children. They were:

Edmond, m. Rebecca Philbrick and Eliza Martin.  
Solomon.

Betsey, m. Sewall Shattuck.

Clarissa, m. America Amsden.

Almon, m. Almira Pratt, Semira Pratt and Grace Stearns.

Sophia, m. Henry Megrath.

Cynthia, m. George Clyde.

John, m. Lydia Pratt.

Christopher, m. Almira Wheeler.

Lucy, m. Wm. Grandey.

Lurinha, m. Frank Curtis, of Boxford, Mass.

His eldest son, Edmond, still lives in Reading, having survived both wives. His children are:

Sabra G., m. Asa A. Burnham.



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GILBERT A. DAVIS.

L. Carlos, m. Ruth Hapgood.

Aurelia, m. Hiram Marsh and Jona. Hapgood of Peru.

Salome, m. Silas A. Robinson.

Eliza, m. Silas W. Pike.

Charles A. m. Nancy E. Jones and Henrietta Doughty.

Fanny R. m. B. F. Barnard.

Justin R. m. Ann Tarbell.

Cornelia, d.

Davis, Gilbert A., Attorney and farmer, m. Delia I. Bolles, was Register of the Probate Court for the District of Windsor from Dec. 1, 1862, to Feb. 1, 1867, and the Register's office during that period was at Felchville.

Davis, Leander, farmer, m. — Allard.

Davis, Myron A., proprietor of steam mill at So. Reading.

Davis, Geo. W., farmer, m.

Dana, Blake, farmer.



ELEAZER DEXTER.

Eleazer Dexter was born in Hardwick Mass., July 7, 1813. At an early age he evinced much musical talent and at the age of 13 commenced to travel with his brother giving public exhibitions of which music was a part, and soon the boy became quite a popular singer. He received instructions from eminent musicians in Boston and early acquired a correct vocalization and has gained an enviable reputation in catering for the public. Possessing a fair baritone voice, his rendering of pathetic, light, comic and eccentric songs is of a high order. His personation of the old man in his

famous song of "Adam and Eve," is inimitable. He is a composer of songs as well as instrumental music, and some of his songs have become quite popular. In 1839 he was engaged to instruct the the Stratton boys in Swanzey N. H., and fitted them in vocal and instrumental music for concerting. They proved apt pupils and readily acquired the knowledge and skill of their instructor, and soon became popular and successful, and one to-day is a manufacturer of musical instruments in Germany, while the other is a music dealer in Boston, Mass., and a successful writer of Operettas. Mr. Dexter came to Reading in 1843 and has ever since made this town his residence. He was the pioneer of all shows and concert troupes in this vicinity. Gentlemanly and courteous in his bearing, with a deep-seated love for music, and talents that attract to him the young of musical tastes, he has exerted a healthy and permanent influence upon the young people of the town. Many eminent musicians (for which the town is celebrated) have received valuable instruction from Mr. Dexter and have made their *debut* as public performers under his charge, among whom are Geo. M. Clark, a famous clown and singer, Hank White, the well known comedian of Whitmore and Clark's minstrels, O. A. Whitmore, solo-clarionetist now in Boston, Mass., Theo. J. Allen, solo-clarionetist and teacher of Brass Bands, Boston, Willie J. Foley of Reading, with others perhaps not so generally known. Mr. Dexter has quite a reputation as a teacher of dancing.

He still continues the business of a public showman which he has pursued for nearly forty-six years, and is still popular with that class of people who would patronize no exhibition but those of a strictly moral character. He has given over forty exhibitions in Reading.

Dorman, Julius, farmer m.

Douglass, John, farmer, m.

Dugan, W. H. H. farmer m. Mrs. Roena Gay.

Eastman, Albert, farmer and Justice of the Peace, m.

Elgar, Henry, manufacturer, m.

Emery, Thos. J. farmer, m.

Emery, Daniel, farmer, m.

Emerson, Leicester, farmer, m.

Fay, Hiram S., farmer, m. — Burnham.

Fletcher, Sumner, farmer, m. Has been justice, selectman and town representative two terms.

Fletcher, Thos. S., farmer, m. Mrs. Mary Farwell.

Fay, Levi C., now of Windsor, carried on the shoe-making business for many years at Reading Centre; and subsequently mercantile business at the Centre and Felchville. As a merchant he was very successful. He was frequently elected to important offices.

His children are:

Amanda, m. Capt. Chester Pike of Cornish, Vt.

Collamer T., m. Carrie Watkins.

Edmond S., m. Franscelia Kendall.



Julia, m.  
 Foley, John, farmer, m. Zanora Allen.  
 Foley, Willie, a musician of good reputation.  
 Fullam Elroy C., farmer, m. — Houghton.  
 Fulton, James W., farmer and Justice of the Peace, m. Phila  
 E. Dutton.  
 Foster, Otis, farmer and drummer.



RUFUS FORBUSH.

Rufus Forbush, Esq., youngest son of Capt. Rufus and Mary (Brown) Forbush, was born in Westborough, Mass, Jan. 25, 1794. At the age of twelve he came to Reading with his parents who settled on the farm now owned by Albert Eastman, Esq. When sixteen years old he enlisted into the war of 1812, served through that war and received an honorable discharge.

He married March 14, 1822, Fidelia, youngest daughter of David Hapgood, Esq., with whom he lived happily nearly forty-five years. They had five children, Charles A., Rufus O., Harriet F., Agnes V. and Mary Jane.

He early took an active part in all public matters and contributed his full share in time and means to shape and carry forward the various enterprises of the town. He was for many years justice of the peace and selectman, represented the town in the Legislature in 1844-5, was elected delegate to the convention in 1843 to consider alterations of the constitution of the State, and to every succeeding convention of that kind until those conventions

were abolished by the Legislature in 1865. He died in this town August 16, 1866, aged 72 years.

REV. SEWALL FULLAM,

son of Timothy, was born in Sterling, Mass., March 2d, 1773, moved to Cavendish Vt., in 1798, and to Reading, March 27, 1807, where he died April 27, 1842.

He was a preacher of the Methodist denomination for a series of years, when disagreeing with them on the infinity of sin and church government, he withdrew from them and united with the Free Will Baptists, where he continued until his death. His education was that of the common schools of his time with a thorough attention to books and extensive reading, yet he was a correct, energetic and effective speaker and possessed of strong and clear logical powers.

He represented Reading in the Legislature, for five consecutive years and held other important offices and was regarded as a very able and competent man; he was the father of 6 children. He was married at Fitchburg, Mass., Mar. 25th, 1798, to Mehitable Harris of Fitchburg.

Gates, Dexter, P. farmer, m. Lucia E. Stearns.

Gates, Morrill, farmer, m. Asenath Lamb.

Giddings, Hiram A., mechanic, m. Emily Perry

Giddings, Wm. H., farmer, m. Susan Densmore.

Gilbert, Alonzo, S., harness-maker, m. Sophronia Glynn.

Gilbert, George.

HON. ABEL GILSON, JR.

Mr. Gilson was born in Rindge, N. H., April 20, 1789. At the age of fifteen his father's family removed to Reading. He was a volunteer in the war of 1812, and for many years was post master at the centre where he traded in company with Levi Bailey under the style of Bailey & Gilson, and held various town offices. Afterwards he removed to Proctorsville and engaged in manufacturing in the firm of Gilson, Smith & Co. He held the office of justice of the peace about fifty years. He was the town clerk of Reading from 1823 to 1833, town representative in 1826 and in 1840 and 1841 a member of the Vermont Senate. He was widely known as a useful and extensive business man in his day. He died very suddenly at Springfield, Vt., April 12, 1870, aged nearly 81 years.

Daniel Gilson came from Rindge, N. H., and located upon and cleared up land northerly of M. C. Newton's. He m. Lucy Platts of Rindge. Their children were:

Lucy, m. Joseph Allen of Reading.

Sarah, m. Asa Keyes.

Roxanna, m. Walter Parker, d. in Iowa.

Eunice, m. Ephraim Hubbard of Bridgewater, Vt.

Polly, m. Stephen Dix of Plymouth.

Phidelia, m. John Grandey,  
Calvin, m. Azubah Grandey.

Laura Fletcher for 2d wife.

Luther, m. Lemira Dyer, Aug. 18, 1829.

Altha, m. Benj. Wright of Rutland.

Elhanan, m. 1st, Charlotte Morey.

2d, Betsey Worthen.

Hosea B., m. Mary Wheeler,

Heman, m. Caroline Ordway.

Luther's children :

Charlotte J., m. Wm. W. Wilkins.

Ellen Lorette, m. A. Wilkins.

Frances Juliette, m. Duane C. Sherwin,

Elbridge C., m. 1st, Jane Emery, 2d, Linette Gilson.

Henry H., enlisted Dec. 6, 1861, Co., G, 7th Vt., Vol., d. Jan. 12, 1863.

Forest D., m. resides in Illinois.

Altha, m. Eugene Wilkins.

Mary, m. Sewall Wilkins.

Fremont.

Gilson, Curtis H., farmer, m.

Green, Elbert, miller, m. Maria Fairbanks.

#### DEA. AARON GODDARD,

son of Rev. William Goddard, was born in Westmoreland, N. H., Oct. 28, 1771. Came from Swanzey, N. H., about the year 1793 and ultimately owned some three hundred acres of land. He married Elizabeth Howe of Westminster, Mass. He cleared up the farm so long occupied by Hiram Goddard. He was a prominent man in the affairs of the town having served as selectman, lister, &c. His sons Arnold, Hiram and Aaron W. Goddard have long been residents of Reading, and frequently been entrusted with the management of the town affairs.

Hiram Goddard, Esq., was born March 5, 1803, and always resided on the paternal acres. He held a commission as Justice of the Peace for thirty years, represented the town in 1852 and held the office of selectman, &c. He was a man of sound judgment and much decision of character. He was twice married, first to Mary Ackley, April 1, 1830, who died May 25, 1863, and again to Mrs. D. Maria Dale, Sept. 8, 1864. He died April 28, 1868.

Arnold Goddard for many years resided in the Borough, on a farm cleared up by his uncle Daniel Goddard. He left surviving him a widow Sarah, daughter of Abiah Rice, and only one child, Mrs. Sarah A. Hager of Proctorsville, Vt.

Aaron W. Goddard has long been a large and successful farmer and held the offices of selectman, justice, lister, &c.

Of the daughters, Eunice married Sewall Fullam, Esq., a well known attorney of Ludlow Vt; Candace, married Benoni Buck, Esq.; and Cynthia, married Allen Spaulding, Esq.

Goddard, Elwyn W., farmer, m. Euphrasia Taylor.

Goddard, Merritt E., A. M., graduate of Dartmouth College, justice of the peace, town representative in 1863 and 1864, farmer, m. 1st, Amanda Keyes, 2d, Mrs. Lorette L. Whitten.

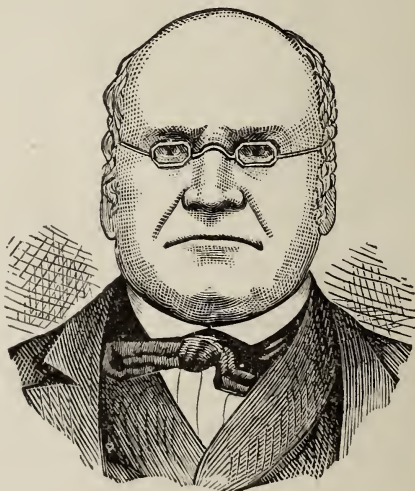
Gould, Francis, farmer, m.

Glynn, Isaac, manufacturer of chairs, m. — Locke.

Glynn, Cyrus, dealer in general merchandise, alcohol and whiskey, m. Lillian Davenport.

Green, Charles, farmer.

Thomas F. Hammond, born in Reading, was a distinguished surveyor and Judge of the Probate Court for the District of Windsor for many years. [No facts in his history have been furnished.]



WILLIAM L. HAWKINS.

Wm. L. Hawkins, son of Wm. A. Hawkins, was born in Northboro, Mass., June 14, 1773. His father was a captain in the Revolutionary army and served at the battle of Bunker Hill and in other battles.

At the close of the war he came to Reading from Wilton, N. H., and pitched a lot of land west of the "Orson Townsend place," and returning to Wilton sent his son, Wm. L., in June, 1789, to commence the clearing and in a few weeks followed with the remainder of the family.

William L. began at the age of eighteen to teach district schools, his first school being at Bailey's Mills, in the winter of 1791-'2, having then under his instruction over ninety scholars. He followed the occupation of a pedagogue each winter thereafter up to about 1818. He was possessed of a vigorous intellect, ready



wit and was commanding in his personal bearing. He governed his scholars sternly yet easily—no one daring to disobey, and he was well qualified for the duties of his position so far as his literary attainments were called into service. He was, also, famous in his day, as a teacher of singing. He was a deacon in the Congregational Church, for years lead the singing and played the bass viol in church, and contributed liberally of his means and labors to build up the interests of the church. He was the active member of the building committee at the time of the erection of the meeting house at the Center.

In 1794, he became the owner of 200 acres of land and was engaged principally in farming until 1821, when he built the hotel at Hammondsville, opening it for the public in 1822. This hotel was burned about 1836, but he afterwards built another in its place and was a hotel keeper twenty years. He married Anna Townsend. He was town clerk, town representative, justice of the peace, post master for 30 years and run a grist mill, saw mill and carding machine west of Bailey's Mills.

His children were:

Wm. Adrian, m. Betsey Davis.

Alfred, farmer, m. — Smith of St. Albans, Vt.

Isabella.

Ferdinand, m. Charlotte Amsden.

Hortia.

Josiah Q., lawyer, m. Susan Badlam.

#### BENJ. HATHORN

came from Jaffrey N. H., and settled in the Dea. Pratt neighborhood prior to 1787. He had served in the Revolutionary army about three months. He m. Rhoda Carlton Mar. 28. 1787, by whom he had eleven boys and three girls, and all but one attained full age. During the latter part of his life he lived on the farm now owned by C. H. Cady. Of his children:

Collins, a farmer, now lives in Alden, N. Y.

Rhoda, m. Jona. Esterbrooks, lives in Merilla, N. Y.

Candace, m. Asa Newton, farmer, Reading.

Alva, farmer, resides at New Haven, Vt.,

Laban, farmer, resides at Barnard, Vt.

Henry C., farmer, resides at Woodstock, Vt.

Hiel, shoe maker, resides at Troy, N. Y.

Benjamin was in mercantile business at the centre, in the firm of Bailey & Hathorn, and d. of spotted fever in 1813.

#### HOLMES FAMILY.

A Holmes family, consisting of three brothers, Israel, Michael and Oliver, and four sisters, Orpha, Rebecca, Abigail and Lizzy, came to Reading from Kingston, Mass. They were grandchildren of Governor Bradford of Mass., and inherited some of his proper-

ty. They brought with them "a half bushel of silver dollars," and bought the farm now owned by Wm. C. Bement, Esq. The land was conveyed to the brothers, but as part of the money belonged to the sisters, a part of the land was staked out for them and that part was occupied by Oliver, but Oliver and his wife fell victims to the spotted fever in 1813, leaving five children. In after years Israel became poor, his property was all attached, and according to the harsh rule of law then in force his body became liable to arrest. Process issued against his body and John A. Pratt, Robert Barker, George Rice and Zebina Logan came from Woodstock to make the arrest. Approaching the house, Mr. Holmes at once conjectured the nature and purpose of their coming and retreated into that part of the house occupied by a Mr. Rollins as tenant, and secreted himself in a large old-fashioned closet, while Mrs. Rollins placed her foot-wheel against the door, and very quietly but busily engaged in spinning. The officer and his assistants *guessed* that Mr. Holmes was in the closet; they flattered, entreated and threatened Mrs. R. to induce her to move, but *she was so much in a hurry to complete that particular piece of work that she could not possibly spend time to stop*, and the wheel buzzed cheerfully; they dared not forcibly remove her, and in order to solve the legal problem two men were left to guard the closet door while the other two went to "The Green" for counsel. Mr. James Bryant, a neighbor, observing these movements, and learning their object, mounted one of his nice horses and drove to Mr. Holmes', and succeeded in deeply interesting the two watchmen in the qualities and speed of his horse. At an opportune moment, Mr. Holmes left the closet, house, town and State, never to return.

Bradford Holmes, a nephew, married Miss Arvilla Whitmore.

#### ORSEMOR S. HOLDEN

was b. at Reading, July 30, 1843, son of Joel and Priscilla Holden. He early developed musical talents, and became a master of the organ, banjo and guitar, and a popular singer of sentimental songs. He has a cultivated baritone voice and renders with much taste and effect the popular songs, entitled, "*Old Elm Tree*," "*Shelling Green Peas*," "*Don't be angry with me, Darling*," and many others. He m. J. Ella Nutting of Andover, Vt.

Hastings, Zenas, blacksmith, m.

Hastings, Charles, blacksmith.

Hastings, George, blacksmith.

Hammond, Ed. S., farmer, m. Jane M. Shedd.

Hapgood, S. K., cooper and farmer, m.

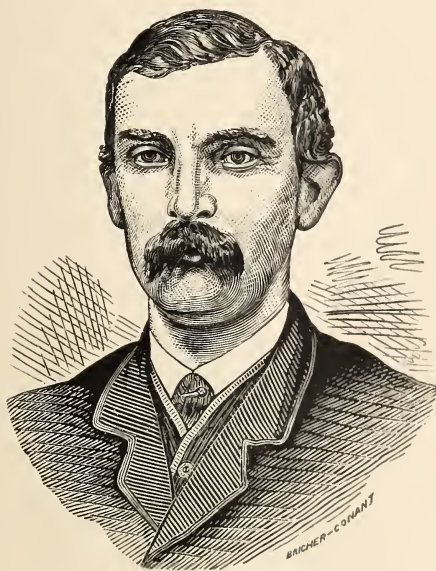
Haven, Frank, farmer m. — Richardson.

Hawkins, Carlos, manufacturer and musician, leader of Hawkins' band, m. — Hiland.

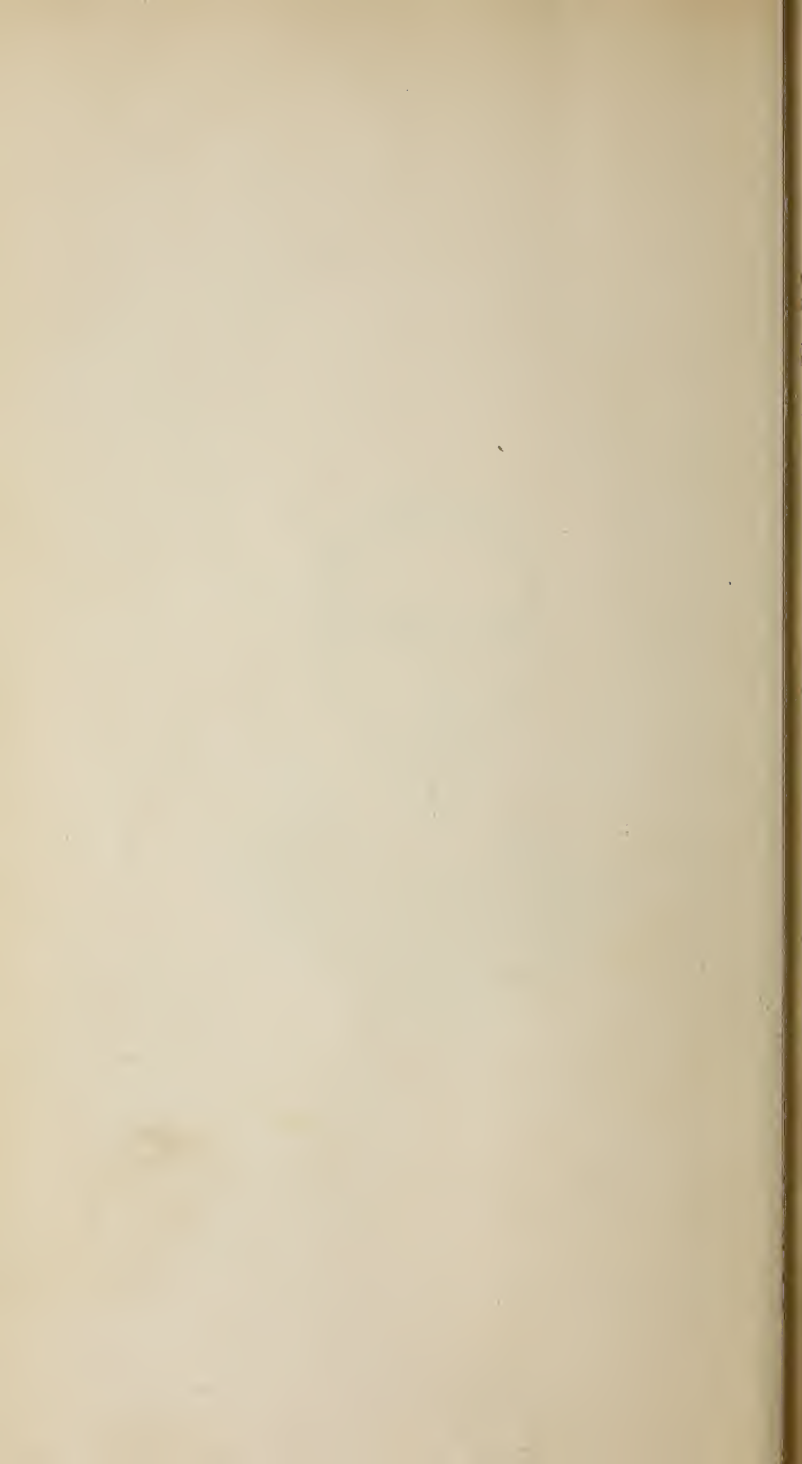
Harris, Wm. W. harness maker, m.

Harlow, Charles, farmer, m. Susan Noyes.

Harlow, Lemuel, basket-maker.



ORSEMER S. HOLDEN.





Hoadley, Roswell W., farmer, m. Sarah Kile.  
 Ide, Lemuel, Simeon and Wm. B. [See Stone, Zenas.]

## JONES FAMILY.

Jona. Jones, Sr., came to Reading in 1793 and cleared up a farm west of Justin Davis' present residence and was a farmer and shoe maker.

He m. Abigail Wright, who d. July 4, 1829, aged 76 years. Mr. J. d. Sept. 18, 1836.

Their children :

Sally, d. Aug. 18, 1836.

Jotham, d. Jan. 1, 1829.

Abigail, m. Rev. Josiah Wetherbee ; she d. Sept. 17, 1854.

Ephraim, d. at So. Reading, Feb. 23, 1866.

Ephraim Jones, m. ————

Their children :

Augustus V. m. Viola Estabrooks, resides at Fitchburg, Mass.

Horatio, d. Oct. 1821

Lydia Ann, m. Thos. Barker, resides at Fitchburg, Mass.

Lindsey Wright, d. Aug. 21, 1842.

Lafayette, m. Elizabeth Pratt, d. Aug. 19, 1856.

Frederick Sidney, m. ———— resides in California.

Eleanor Robinson, m. Lorenzo Barker, resides in Fitchburg, Mass.

Henry C. m. Nellie Richards, resides in Reading.

Nancy Electa, m. Chas. A. Davis, d. June 12, 1852.

Frances E. d. Aug. 25, 1836.

Edgar F., m. resides in Ohio.

Augusta Victoria, m. Porter Barton, resides in N. J.

Maria Louisa, m. Warren Shattuck, d. Mar. 31, 1861.

Children of Jotham and Melinda (Fay) Jones :

Caroline M., m. Miletus A. Ballard, resides in Stockbridge Vt.

Marcella, m. Henry P. Strong, resides in Pomfret Vt.

Maria, m. Alfred H. Perkins, resides in Royalston, Mass.

Children of Abigail Jones who m. Rev. Josiah Wetherbee :

Isaac, m. Sarah Sheldon, Boston, Mass.

Maria, m, ———Shultz, Johnsburg, N. Y.

Daniel, resides in Illinois.

Jonathan Jones, Jr., b. Dec. 28, 1789, d. Apr. 27, 1872, m. Polly Wetherbee.

Jona. Jones, Jr., received only a common school education, was a farmer, but early became a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, was for many years leader of the class at South Reading, and at the session of the N. H. Conference holden at Claremont, N. H., June 25, 1843, he was ordained by Bishop Beverly Wagh as a deacon or local preacher in the M. E. Church. He preached in Plymouth, Reading, Windsor and Cavendish. Their children :

Jona. W. b. Dec. 23, 1811, d. June 2, 1812.

Daniel P. b. March 22, 1813, m. Marriette Ballard.

Mary, b. Sept. 26, 1814, d. June 26, 1832.

Cynthia, b. Dec. 28, 1816, d. July 23, 1850.

Fletcher, b. June 24, 1818, m. Mary Powers of Johnson, Vt.

Marcia, b. Feb. 29, 1820, m. Harvey Howard of Acworth, N. H.

Rollin C., b. Oct. 6, 1821, m. Marcia Andrews of Nashua, N. H.

Franklin, b. Nov. 15, 1825, d. Jan. 31, 1833.

Jane M., b. April 9, 1827, m. W. S. Cheney of Danby, Vt.

Wesley, b. May 9, 1829, m. Caroline Spafford, Boston, Mass.

Candace E., b. May 25, 1831, d. June 13, 1866, m. Jubal B. Buck.

Mary L., b. Nov. 18, 1834, m. Merrill B. Batchelder, East Stratford, Conn.

#### LUTHER KENDALL, ESQ.

came to Reading in March, 1829, and bought for \$825, the valuable farm of sixty acres, now owned by E. W. Watkins. In 1831 he sold this farm to Allen Breed and bought for \$400, of Zimri Kimball, about twenty acres, including all north of Mrs. F. G. Rice's homestead, and the north branch to Joseph Fairbanks' south line, as far east as the Main street, except the hotel lot and store lot, and west to the Megrath farm. The foundation of the manufacturing interests in Felchville, was laid by a lease from Mr. Kendall to Wm. and Hosea Felch. He has held the offices of selectman, justice and constable. He m. Betsey White, by whom he had three children :

Harris, m. Abbie Bannister, both deceased.

Alzina, m. Henry J. Hulett.

Harriet S., m. Willard S. Gates who died, leaving one child, Fred K. Gates, grocer and dealer in boots, shoes, coffins and caskets at Felchville.

Wm. Kile came from Plainfield, N. H., in the spring of 1788, and settled near the present residence of Erastus Meachem. He "pitched" 48½ acres in 1794, in Reading Gore. He married a daughter of John Sherwin ; Mrs. R. W. Hoadley and Mrs. Nancy Caldwell are their daughters.

King, — farmer and peddler, m.

#### THE KEYES FAMILY.

BY W. W. KEYES.

Col. Danforth Keyes, of Weston, now Warren, Worcester Co., Mass., bought in 1770, of Joseph Wait, of Windsor Vt., for fifteen pounds, all the original right of Jonathan Prescott, one of the grantees in the N. H. charter of the town of Reading. Solomon Keyes, a nephew of Danforth Keyes, was born in Arlington Vt. His father dying when he was a boy, he went to live with his uncle in Weston. Came to Reading about the year 1783, built his cabin and commenced a clearing on his uncle's land, on the Flat on which Hammondsville now stands, his house standing back where the brook now runs. In 1785, in consideration of 35 pounds, his uncle Danforth gave him a deed of one hundred and

twenty-five acres, being lot No. 10 in 2d R., and south east quarter of lot No. 10 in 3d R., making one of the best little farms in town. In the same year he married Thankful Lincoln of Weston, Mass., and brought his bride home on an ox sled, having to stop several days in West Windsor, on account of drifts. There he lived until 1819, when he sold for \$2000, and bought what was afterwards known as the first "Poor Farm," where he died Dec. 27th, 1820, in the sixty-fifth year of his age. He served a short term in the war of the Revolution. He was eleven years town clerk, represented the town two years in the Legislature, sometimes selectman and lister, often appointed on special committees, a long time an active justice of the peace, for the duties of which office he seemed to be well fitted. The judgment and impartiality shown in his decisions, have always been especially mentioned by old men of his time.

He had ten children. Asa born in 1786, married Sally Gilson and raised a large family. He always lived in Reading and died in 1856. Nancy born in 1787 married Asahel Goddard, had three sons and four daughters, and is now a widow, living in town with her daughter Mrs. H. H. Hammond. Sophia born in 1787 is still living in West Windsor. Royal born in 1790, a farmer and miller, married Eleanor Annis, raised a large family, and now a fine appearing hale old man, living with his son in Chelsea, Vt., where he has resided nearly forty years.

Harriet, born in 1792 married David Weatherbee, died in town in 1831, leaving two daughters.

Thama, born in 1794 and died in 1804, Sally born in 1798 and died in 1804.

Washington born in 1802, has always lived in Reading, an energetic prosperous farmer, married Eliza, daughter of Ebenezer Robinson by whom he had one daughter. He has served the town two years in the Legislature, three or four years as selectman and overseer of the poor and several years as lister.

Laura born 1803, married James Whitten, has three children, and is now a widow living in Reading.

Solomon Keyes, Jr., seventh child of Solomon and Thankful Keyes, was born Feb. 4th, 1796 and died Sept. 19th, 1872. The first few years of his business life were spent in jobbing, laying wall, &c., and was ever afterwards a farmer. Always lived in town, taking from an early age an active part in all its affairs. Elected constable in 1828, he was during the next fifteen years either constable or deputy sheriff, doing a large business in the county, and having a great reputation as an efficient officer. Represented the town three years, was twelve years overseer of the poor and eight years selectman, sometimes lister and agent. He had a limited, but so far as it went a good education, acquired chiefly under the pedagogical discipline, of "Old Esquire Hawkins." He was quick and accurate in figures, a good reader, speller and writer. Naturally of sound understanding, self-reliant in his opinions, especially free from personal prejudice and malevolence, quick to

see the point of a question, and prompt in decision, energetic in action, and having acquired quite a knowledge of the common law and law business, he inspired his townsmen with great confidence in his judgment on general matters, so that he was often employed as arbiter to settle differences between neighbors, as a counselor, and as a pettifogger in justice courts, and for several years he did quite a law business without being a lawyer. A kind neighbor to whom all went confidently for favors of all kinds. A generous, indulgent father. Free-hearted, hospitable and very social he keenly enjoyed company at home and elsewhere. For some years previous to his death, his health failing, he did but little business, living with his son only a short distance from where he was born. He married in 1825, Sophronia, daughter of Peter Darby of Reading, by whom he had eight children.

Keyes, Wm. W., farmer and town clerk, m. Mary Mahoney.

Keyes, Pardon, farmer, m. ——— Newton.

Keyes, Augustus, farmer, m. Etta Burnham.

Kendall, Aaron T., farmer and livery stable keeper, m.

Kendall, Luther R., m. Mary Felch.

Kendall, Marcus M., merchant, m. Rose Hewitt.

Kendall, Benj. M., wheelwright, m. Susan Spaulding.

Kendall, Harrison P., wheelwright, m. Mary Spaulding.

Kinsman, Parker, farmer, m. Mary Fairbanks.

King, E. F., farmer, m.

Mann, Amos, farmer, m. Mrs. Betsey Forbush.

Maynard, Charles, farmer, m. 1st, Lestina Allen. 2d, ——— Hoisington.

Meacham, Erastus, farmer, m.

Morgan, Samuel, farmer and teacher of singing, m. Augusta Chilson.

Morgan, George, farmer.

Mahoney, Daniel P., farmer, m.

Mahoney, Daniel, O., farmer.

Mahoney, Ed. S., stage driver, m. Luella Fulton.

McCullough, John, farmer and lister, m. Mary Watkins.

Megrath, Henry, farmer, m. Sophia Davis.

Megrath, Lewis, farmer, m. Sarah Luce, d.

Megrath, Alfred, farmer, m. Mary Bartlett.

Miner, Almon D., farmer.

Miner, Dennison, farmer, m. ——— Sumner.

Miner, David, farmer.

Metcalf, Munroe, farmer, m. Eliz. Bassett.

Merrill, Jona., farmer, m.

Merrill, Henry, farmer, m.

Merrill, Edgar, farmer, m.

Mudge, Martin, farmer,

——— Morse cleared up the Sewall Fullam farm. His son, Asa Morse, m. Alice Sawyer. He d. Dec. 24, 1862, aged 71 years. Their children :



Eunice Paulina, m. Dr. Levi Aldrich of Reading, and after his death married S. Hemmenway.

Rhoda, m. Samuel Pember, d. March 5, 1868.

Calvert A. b. Dec. 3, 1828, m. Susan A. Whitaker. He is a justice of the peace, and Supt. of the Union S. School at Felchville.

Morton, Winchester, farmer, m. Sarah Page.

Nason, Thos. E., farmer, m. Mary Nichols.

Newton, Asa, farmer, m. Candace Hathorn.

Newton, Morris C., farmer, m. 1st, Laura Holmes. 2d, — Hewey.

North, Edward M., farmer.

Noyes, James H. farmer.

Persons, Nathaniel, mason, m. Lydia Newhall.

Pettes, Reuben, m. Mrs. Mary Fay.

Persons, Forest G, carpenter, m. Jane Pierce.

Parker, Loren, farmer, m.

Parker, Ed., farmer.

Parker, Amos A, farmer, m. Almira Foster.

Parker, Benj., postmaster, m. Mrs. Mary Pierce.

Parker, Phineas, farmer, m.

Pierce, Oscar, farmer, m. Christiana Hoisington.

Pomeroy, Elijah, farmer.

Pratt, Jarvis, farmer, m. Hannah Stearns. A highly successful farmer, and has one of the best cultivated farms in town. The editor is under great obligations to him for assistance about this publication.

Pratt, Hobert, farmer.

Pratt, Leander, farmer, m.

Pratt, Durett O., lumberman, m.

Putnam, Jonas A., farmer.

#### LUTHER PRATT

came from Fitchburg, Mass, in the fall of 1797, and moved his family into this town early the next year. He bought of Ephraim Davis and settled on the farm next south of Wm. H. Giddings' present residence, then occupied by Elisha Orcutt. He completed a log house that Mr. Davis had commenced and moved his family into it in the summer of 1798. The roof of his domicile was constructed of bark, and the house embraced but one room. This house was his dwelling place until 1810 when he built the framed house now standing. He became an extensive land owner, owning 324 acres in Reading and 358 acres in Caven- dish at the same time. He m. Sukey Childs of Westminster, Mass.

His son, Martin Pratt, now owns the old farm in Reading. He m. Nancy M. Withington. Their daughter, Emogene S., m. Shepherd Giddings, now of Chester.



LEWIS ROBINSON.

WRITTEN BY CALVIN L ROBINSON OF JACKSONVILLE, FLA.

Lewis Robinson was born on the 19th day of August, 1793, on the Robinson farm, half a mile south of the village of South Reading. He was the eldest child of Ebenezer and Hannah Robinson, who, at the time, had but recently settled upon this land, then a wilderness, and commenced clearing up a farm. Their house was but a rude structure standing upon the spot where afterward they built a comfortable and pleasant New England farmer's home. Lewis was raised on this farm, being employed nine months of the year in clearing up and tilling the land, and attending school for three months in the winter. The school house for that part of the town, was at that time a log structure located near the Amasa Watkins farm.

To these advantages for an education were added one term at the old Academy at Duttonsville, and another at a high school at Granville, N. Y.

In those good old days the spirit of the times did not impel the youth to leave their native hills to people the since rapidly opening west. Railroads had not then shot their iron bands over the country, annihilating distance, and infusing their restless, moving spirit into the whole population. The sons and daughters of the early settlers of Vermont were content to build them homes around their ancestral hearth-stones, thus giving each other the pleasure and benefit of that most sure and substantial sympathy—if there is any sure and substantial sympathy among mankind—the sympathy and friendship of family relationship.

The subject of our sketch, with his five brothers and sisters, all settled in or near the village of South Reading, and lived and died there, and were buried in the old village graveyard on the hill. But, notwithstanding he passed his days among the mountains, far away from the great centre of trade, Lewis Robinson showed himself a man of marked ability and energy. Soon after he came "of age," and began the world for himself, he engaged in the business of book publishing, establishing a printing office at Greenbush. He published a number of works there, mostly educational, which were well up to the times in merit, and style of finish. But he soon after went into the copper plate printing, and the publication of maps and scripture paintings, at South Reading, which proved much more remunerative.

About this time, also, he became much interested in Masonry and was an active member of that craft, and it being more difficult then than now to supply the rapidly increasing demand for regalia for the different lodges, he entered largely into the manufacture of that article also, and supplied most of the lodges in Vermont and New Hampshire. But in the map manufacture he found a large field for the exercise of his enterprise. For many years he did a larger business in this line than was carried on by any concern in New England. Indeed he was the earliest extensive map publisher in the United States.

In 1836, with two of his brothers-in-law, he established a large map publishing business in Akron, Ohio, and his maps were sold throughout the western states. In 1839 he opened a store in South Reading and soon after built a starch mill and carried on starch manufacturing; and to this at a later day, added the manufacture of many articles of wooden ware. In 1844 he established a branch of his map business at Stanstead, Lower Canada, and published there a large map of Upper and Lower Canada.

These different branches of business (to which we should also add farming) he conducted for many years, showing a business capacity of an uncommon order.

In politics, Mr. Robinson was a staunch whig, until the organization of the republican party, when, like most whigs, he found himself in sympathy with the new movement, and he acted and voted with them for twelve years before his death. But while he ever took a deep interest in the success of the principles of his party, yet he was not, in any sense, a politician. His tastes and disposition were always averse to engaging in the machinations that so generally characterize political operations, nor would he ever seek or accept any political office. He was not a man of "many words," but took a serious view of life, and went about everything he undertook with the air of one who feels he has a mission to perform on earth, and an account to render for his stewardship here. He was a faithful member of the Methodist Episcopal Church for many years, and when he came to the close of his pilgrimage he exhibited, in an eminent degree the spirit of one who



feels that his treasures are placed over on the other shore, and went down to his grave "like a shock of corn fully ripe for the harvest." A most excellent Christian man, who was for many years in the employ of Mr. Robinson, and was intimate with him, once remarked to his son, "To know and appreciate your father, one needs to be long acquainted with him. I tell you that man's heart is a bright jewel, preparing for the better land."

He lived to the good old age of seventy-eight years and died at his residence in South Reading, November 16, 1871.

Among the sons of Reading who have always remained in their native hills, and given to the land of their birth the benefit of their talent and enterprise, none have shown greater ability and perseverance, and done more to build up the town than the subject of this sketch. The former prosperity of South Reading was mainly due to his efforts, and though the later generations have not added to the improvements so well begun, but, moved by that spirit of migration which so remarkably characterizes modern times, have scattered away from the homes of their fathers and settled in and built up other towns and cities, yet the marks of the enterprise of Lewis Robinson will long stand in his native village to attest the character of the man and call to mind one who loved her rugged hills and did much to give her a name among men.



MARVIN ROBINSON.

WRITTEN BY FRANK M. ROBINSON, ESQ. OF DUBUQUE, IOWA.

Marvin Robinson, the fourth son and fifth child of Ebenezer Robinson, a sketch of whose life appears elsewhere in this volume,



was born March 24, 1800, on what is known as the "Old Esquire Robinson Farm" in South Reading. Until he was twenty-one years of age he assisted his father in clearing away the forests and carrying on the farm. Soon after reaching his majority he commenced the business of tanning in South Reading, and continued it with such success as to acquire not only what was considered a competence, but an amount sufficient to number him among the wealthier men of Reading.

He married October 11, 1826, Lucinda Fullam, by whom he had seven children, Franklin Marvin, Edwin Aretus, Charles Henry, Wallace Fullam, Forest Alonzo, Maria Frances, and Elmer Duane Robinson, all of whom still survive save Forest A., who died in infancy. His wife died Nov. 25, 1839, and on the 22d of September, 1840, he married for his second wife, Charlotte Wood, by whom he had three children, Elroy Clement, Delia Ada, and Addie Lestina, the first of whom only, survives.

He filled several offices of trust in his native town, having been seven times elected one of the selectmen, which position he was filling at the time of his death. He was chosen lister one or more years and served his townsmen in other positions of trust and responsibility. In politics he was a whig, but when the issues upon which that party was founded no longer existed, he gave his vote and his support to the newly formed Republican party. He was not a politician or partisan farther than the principles of his party, in his judgment, conduced to the general public welfare. In religious matters, he made no special profession and adhered to no prescribed tenets, though liberal and catholic in his opinions touching the sentiments and denominational convictions of others. His belief, and it was a thoroughly conscientious one, rested not so much in profession as in works. The single declaration, "By their *works* shall ye know them," was to him alike the corner stone and pillar of all religious life. He measured and judged of his neighbors, and men in all conditions by that standard, nor do we believe it will be a subject of criticism at least by those who knew him best, if we say few men ever lived nearer that standard than himself.

From 1840 he began to pay less attention to the business of tanning and, as his sons grew up, more to that of farming, and about 1853 abandoned the tanner and currier's trade altogether. Thereafter farming was his principal occupation up to the time of his death, which occurred December 22d, 1866.

He was a man of great physical strength and endurance. Whatever he aimed to accomplish he labored for with a perseverance and energy that distanced many a man of weaker will and less physical power. A man of good judgment and sound practical sense himself in regard to all the business and duties that came within the range of his observation, and measuring everything by a matter of fact test, he entertained but poor opinion of all the-

ories and schemes in which he could see no tangible value or practical utility.

His early education was limited to that afforded by the common schools, and a wider range of scholastic training he deemed quite unnecessary for the successful business man. His sons he taught the hard lessons of self-reliance and economy, by making them, from boyhood, dependent upon their own resources for all beyond necessary food and clothing, and when they reached manhood the same austere discipline compelled them, unaided, to make their own place in the world and be the founders as well as architects of their own fortunes.

His opinions he held firmly and the fear or favor of no man ever checked their free expression, while his unswerving integrity of purpose and character were never called in question by friend, neighbor or townsman. By nature, stern and strong himself, his discipline and judgment of others may have sometimes seemed to be severe, but severity was never allowed to overbalance what he believed to be the even scale of justice.

New England, almost from the rocks, has been made the Eden she is, through the energy, economy, perseverance and practical intelligence of men of his type.

Fresh in memory may his virtues live, while the life that illustrated them no longer remains an example to mankind.

Randall, B. D., jeweler, m. — Spaulding.

Reed, V. A., farmer, m. 1st, — Fulton, 2d, — Hewey.

Reynolds, F. G., lumberman, m.

Rice, Hiram, farmer, m. — Morrison.

Rice, Frederick G., manufacturer of bedsteads and wheelwright, d. Feb. 1, 1873. He was an exemplary christian, supt. of Union Sunday-school of Felchville, and an enterprising and public-spirited citizen. His first wife was — Cushman. His second wife, who survives him, is Mrs. Caroline S. Lahfair.

#### GEO. W. RICH,

farmer, m. Bethia Temple. Their children:

Geo. F., m. Flora Forbush who deceased. He then m. Lilla Doughty, Aug. 31, 1870.

Jane, m. Walter I. Kendall, Esq. of West Windsor.

Charles R., James A., William A. and Burton.

Robinson, Ezra A., farmer, m. Ellen Herrick.

Robinson, John, shoe-maker, m. Amanda Wood.

Rounds, George, farmer, m.

Rounds, Elwyn, employee in steam mill, m.

Rockwood, Leander, carpenter, m. Jenette Holmes.

Rockwood, C. A., farmer, m. Mary Ann Shedd, d.

Royce, Chester, carpenter and wheelwright, m. Maria Spear.

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DR. W. S. ROBINSON.



WALTER SCOTT ROBINSON, M. D.

WRITTEN BY GEORGE M. CLARK.

The subject of our sketch was born in Weathersfield, Vt., Sept. 6, 1840.

He lived at home with his parents, who were farmers by occupation, until he was fifteen years of age, working on the farm summers and attending district school winters.

In the fall of 1855, he commenced his academic studies at Springfield, Vt., remaining two years.

In the fall of 1859, he went into the office of Dr. D. W. Hazleton, Cavendish Vt., and commenced the study of medicine, continuing the same studies, and attending lectures in the College of Physicians and Surgeons, Bellevue, and New York City hospitals, for two years, and graduated at Dartmouth Medical College, N. H., November, 1863.

The same winter he married Miss Annie E. Tuttle of Proctorsville Vt., and came to Reading Vt., and commenced his professional career as a physician and surgeon, in the spring of 1864.

He was appointed United States examining surgeon for pensions in 1864, and still holds that position. He was also surgeon general of the State of Vermont two years, on the staff of Gov. John W. Stewart.

He has been ever ready to attend the call of the poor as well as the call of the more favored class, and his genial, social disposition, has made him generally popular.

He has been reasonably successful in his practice, both professionally and financially, and has ever been ready to lend his aid in any public enterprise. He was one of the founders of the Reading Library Association, and has held the office of president since its organization.

As a citizen, he is esteemed by his townsmen, and holds a respectable rank among his medical associates.

He was president of the Centennial Celebration of Reading in 1872, and filled the position with honor to the town and credit to himself.

## JONATHAN RALPH FARM.

This farm is situated in the north-east part of the town. The portion at one time occupied by Andrew Spear and Oliver Davis, is now owned by Geo. W. Davis. The part originally sold to G. B. Ralph, and occupied by him, is now owned by Aaron H. Davis and occupied by his son Leander.

There have been on the farm fourteen different dwelling houses.

The names of the heads of families that have lived on the place are as follows, viz :

Andrew Spear, Perley Cady, John Cady, Oliver Davis, — Butterfield, Rufus Root, — Lamphear, — Martin, John L. Pearsons, Daniel Peabody, William Person, Lewis Person, —

Dike, Phineas Ralph, Jonathan Ralph, Stephen Kittridge, Geo. Spear, Samuel Weeden, Jr., Galo B. Ralph, Royal Cottle, Eben A. Bridge, Edwin M. Jaquith, Benj. F. Sargent, James Sleeper, Leander Davis.

Over one hundred persons have resided there and removed to other homes.

The following named persons have lived and died on the place:

John Cady and wife, John L. Person, Daniel Peabody and wife, Jonathan Ralph and wife, Galo B. Ralph, and Mrs. Elmina Barnes, children of Jonathan Ralph. A child of Stephen Kittridge, Mrs. Marey Weeden relict of Samuel Weeden, Sr., Oscar and Clarence, sons of Geo. Spear, Royal Cottle, Mrs. Maria Courtland, daughter of Royal Cottle, Marcella Weeden, daughter of S. Weeden, Jr.

#### JOHN YORK SAWYER

was the son of Benjamin and Sally (York) Sawyer and was born at Reading; received an academic education at Randolph (Vt.) Academy, read law in the office of Judge Uriel C. Hatch, then residing at Cavendish, Vt., until the rising clouds of the war of 1812 interested him and he entered the army; was a recruiting officer and then 1st Lt. in 31st Regiment, U. S. Infantry, Col. Dana. He was honorably mustered out of service in June, 1815. He then resumed the study of the law in the office of the Hon. Asa Aiken of Windsor, Vt., and was admitted to the bar at Woodstock, Vt.

He opened his law office in Edwardsville, Madison Co., Illinois, in the fall of 1816, and rapidly attained a lucrative practice and an honorable position at the bar. He was made register of the land office and probate judge, and subsequently judge of the circuit court. He died in 1836.

Sawyer, Daniel P., farmer, m. Arabella Ruggles.

#### JONA. SHEDD, ESQ.,

came from Groton, Mass. in 1790, and worked that summer in clearing up the one hundred acres west of S. C. Shedd's present residence, and in building a log house. He returned to Groton, was married and arrived in Reading in February, 1791, bringing his wife and furniture on an ox sled, and took up his residence in his log house and thereafter resided on that place and in the "Joseph Shedd" house, which he built in 1815.

His children were:

Isaac, b. Dec. 30, 1791, m. Sally Haekett.

Shubael C., b. May 17, 1793, m. Polly Shaw, Feb. 26, 1815.  
m. Sally Bailey, Feb. 14, 1856.

Jephtha, b. July, 1797, m. Betsey Bailey.

Triplets, all d. in infancy.

Joseph, b. Nov. 1806, m. Widow Betsey Shedd.

Isaac's children:

Allen, b. August, 1814, m. Sarah Butterfield.

Abigail, b. April, 1816, m. John Priest.

Polly, b. — m. Alvin Taylor.

Naomi, b. — m. Willard Butterfield.

Sarah Ann, b. — m. Capt. Jesse C. Spaulding.

Jephtha's children :

Frederick, m. Lovina Bailey.

Albila, m. Geo. Bailey of Reading.

Shubael C. Shedd, Esq., has to a great extent enjoyed the confidence of his fellow townsmen. He represented the town in the Legislature for two years, and has served as Justice of the Peace for 26 years. He has ever been a farmer and resided near his birth place, and at the advanced age of 80 years is remarkably healthy and vigorous.

His children are :

Salome W., m. Sylvester Newton.

Orilla, m. Geo. Forbush.

Mary Ann, m. C. A. Rockwood.

Jane M., m. Edmond S. Hammond.

Sherwin, Duane C., farmer m. Frances J. Gilson.

Sherwin, Luzerne, farmer, m. — Holt.

Sherwin, Nathan, farmer, m. Christiana Whitmore.

Sherwin, E. O., farmer, m. Ann Shedd.

Smith, David D., farmer m. Marion M. Bodwell.

Smith, Robert, blacksmith, m. Mrs. — Bryant.

Stafford, Albert C., tinman, m. Frances Shedd.

Stearns, Edgar, farmer, m.

#### PAUL AND DANIEL STEARNS.

WRITTEN BY J. MILTON STEARNS.

In 1796 Paul and Daniel Stearns purchased land, on what was known as the Reading and Windsor gore ; already settled and to some extent cleared up. 50 acres were bought of John " Bellus "— being the westerly half of the present Jarvis Pratt homestead. Seventeen acres of land were bought of William Kile, a son-in-law of John Sherwin, supposed to have embraced the Paul Stearns homestead, now occupied by Honestus Stearns, and fifty acres of land and half of the old Judd mill were bought of Hawkins Judd. All these parcels of land were either farmsteads or had considerable improvements upon them, so that Daniel and Paul Stearns may be classed among the second generation of the settlers of Reading.

What became of Bellus is not certain. John Sherwin, who sold to one Garey the Paul Stearns homestead, died in town, and his widow died at Felchville.

Mrs. R. W. Hoadley, her grand-daughter, is still residing there.

For two or three years Daniel and Paul Stearns resided and worked together on the lands they had purchased, and finally made

a division in 1798 to 1800, each taking the separate farms on which they spent their days.

Daniel Stearns married before he came to the town one Martha Kemp, who had one child, Martha, both of whom died, I think, in Leominster, Massachusetts. He then married Sarah Pratt, daughter of David Pratt of Fitchburg, Mass., by whom he had the following children, to wit:

Sarah, who died at the age of 10 years.

Justin, now 73 years of age, residing at Fitchburg, Mass.

Hannah, now living on the old homestead, the wife of Jarvis Pratt.

Daniel, residing at Windsor, Vermont.

James M., recently residing at Weathersfield, Vt., now deceased.

Rufus, residing near the Paul Stearns homestead.

Besides these they had a son Charles, who died about the age of—

Mary, who died at the age of 29, and Betsey, who married James Boutelle, and died at Shipton, Lower Canada, many years since.

Paul Stearns married first Grace Washburn, by whom he had one son, Charles; the mother dying soon after its birth, the son dying in his 15th year. He was a very promising young man. From the vigor of early manhood he suddenly fell a victim to brain fever, leaving his friends to the sad regrets of a lifetime, that prospects so bright and promising should so vanish as at early morning.

Paul Stearns then married Lucy Kneeland who is still living with her youngest son Honestus, in Reading, at the venerable age of 97 years.

She had children, as follows:

Timothy Kneeland, who died in infancy.

Lucy, born in 1804, married John Gilson, and died in 1848, leaving five sons and two daughters still living.

Grace, born in 1806, married Almon Davis and died in 1863, leaving no children.

Sarah, who was born in 1812, married Samuel Lamb, of Bridgewater, and died in February, 1867, leaving two sons and five daughters still living, her oldest son having fallen a victim to the hardships of the service in the late war.

Thomas, born Sept. 1808, died at the age of 18 years.

John Milton, the writer of this sketch, born Dec. 13, 1810, now residing at Brooklyn, N. Y.

Benjamin Franklin, now residing at Everett, near Boston, Massachusetts, born Dec. 25, 1814. His twin brother, George Washington, is a Methodist clergyman and homœopathic physician, residing in New Bedford, Mass.

Paul W. Stearns, born March 4, 1817, is still living at Felchville, Vt.





HONESTUS STEARNS.

Honestus, the youngest, a farmer, born July 22, 1820, still occupies the old homestead, is possessed of extensive and varied information, and is the author of a poem delivered at the Centennial Celebration.

Paul and Daniel Stearns were descended from Charles Stearns, one of the first settlers of Watertown, Massachusetts, through his son Shubael and his grand-son Samuel and great-grand-son Thomas Stearns of Leominster, Massachusetts. The chronicle of the Stearns family says: This Thomas Stearns was a farmer and eminent for his christian virtues. I suppose, in other words, that he was orthodox in his religion, and made the Westminster catechism the text-book of his household teaching.

Daniel and Paul Stearns lost their father in very early life; and their mother having married again, they became members of their grand-father's family until they went out to provide for themselves.

The two brothers had scarcely an equal chance at the beginning, as Daniel being the oldest son had a double share of his father's estate, according to the then existing law of Massachusetts. But the meager share of either was not sufficient to ruin them, much. They were as different from each other in mental habit and cast of mind as if no relationship existed between them. Daniel was of easy, good nature, took the world with a kindly consideration, and did efficient service in his calling, without any impatience or haste. He was a man popular with the public, esteemed of good judgment, and conservative in his decisions, a man of affairs who took a practical view of things, and discharged public trusts committed to him, with eminent safety as well as with a degree of conciliation towards opposing influences. He attained the rank of captain of

the town militia, and served for many years as selectman, without ever making an enemy in the execution of his trusts. He was known as a Universalist in his religion, not so much as a sequence of theological propositions, as from the humanitarian conceptions of his kindly heart. With probably less education than his brother Paul, he seemed to have a standing, and confidence with the public, that made his abilities at once practical and effective. This prestige of the father was inherited by his children, who have realized an influence, that has greatly tended to their success and prosperity in life.

Paul Stearns had for his day, a good common school education, and used his qualifications in teaching the school of his neighborhood one winter, and served as clerk of the school district for near thirty years, and served the town several years as lister, being esteemed qualified for the duties as a legible penman and a ready arithmetician. But he was less fitted for public life than his brother Daniel, being dogmatical in his opinions, impatient and petulant in meeting obstacles, nervous in temperament, and fitful and uncertain in perseverance. In a word, in almost everything he failed to *command* the situation in which he was placed; rather sinking down under a fitful effort to peevishness and complaint, than pushing matters to results. In money matters, he was scrupulously honest, economical and conservative, and on the farm and in the domestic household, a large family was no where else supported by a better economy. As to his religious ideas, though calling himself a Universalist, he judged his fellowmen too severely too believe them quite fitted for paradise, yet they must all, as it were, become bleached out in character by some divine influence, else God would be unjust in fitting one person for heaven and not fitting another for the same state. His ideas were more in theoretical opinions drawn from extreme ideas of fatal necessity controlling the divine will, than from any special affection for *all mankind*. His opinions were the result of the possession of views of the divine government, that may be described as a sort of antinomian orthodoxy. He believed in divine decrees as a special paramount force, so severely organized as to have no scope at all for the freedom of the human will, or human free agency with a moral responsibility attached. Still it was a part of his domestic law that his children should not practice profanity or violate the sanctity of the Sabbath by play or work, except in a case of extreme necessity. His case was that of a religious education, perverted to support speculative, absurd opinions. These views of his character and opinions are gathered from his life, before he was subject to the infirmities that depressed the last twenty-five years of his life's existence. He died in 1844, in the seventieth year of his age.

#### ZENAS STONE.

1775. About this year Mr. Zenas Stone of Shrewsbury, Mass., moved into Reading and occupied a few acres of land on which

was a small house and barn "under the hill" on the road leading from Dr. Silas Bowen's to the Withereil and Watkins families. His wife was a daughter of Dr. Flint of Shrewsbury, Mass., and one of his sons bore the tender name of *Flint Stone*. Mr. Stone subsequently was a gate tender on the Boston and Worcester turnpike at the east end of the bridge over Long Pond in Shrewsbury, and while thus employed the following incident, illustrative of his readiness for an emergency, happened:

On a time a splendid two-horse equipage, with a livery-clad driver came up and proceeded past the toll house without deigning to stop to pay the regular toll. "Halloo there!" vociferated Mr. S., and following after and coming up to the carriage, added: "Will you stop, sir, and pay your fine?" "Pay my fine," said a voice within the carriage, "My name is Gen. \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_." "And my name is Zenas Stone, toll-gatherer of Shrewsbury, and "General \_\_\_\_\_ will hand over to him the fine which the law "prescribes for running the gate." And after a few moments discussion of the point at issue between them, the "General" concluded to 'hand over.'

#### LEMUEL IDE.

In 1797 Mr. Lemuel Ide, whose wife was a sister of Mr. Stone, moved into Reading, his family consisting of two sons, Simeon, aged three years, Wm. B., aged one and one-half years, and Abigail K., an orphan child of his brother Simon, aged five years; and leaving them in the care of Mr. Stone he made a journey by water to one of the southern states, to settle a deceased brother's estate; was absent about a year; on his return, he resided about one year in Clarendon, then removed back to Reading and in 1802 bought a lot of about 20 acres near the residence of Mr. John Sawyer on which was a small tenement. Mr. Ide was a carpenter; was fond of change. He commenced housekeeping in 1793, and died in Newfane Vt., in 1825 and during the intervening 32 years resided in 14 different places. He was possessed of an active inquiring mind, much given to reading and to political discussions, and in 1809 was elected the representative of Reading in the Legislature by the Republican party, and lacked but one vote of a reelection the following year, his defeat being upon strictly party grounds.

#### SIMEON IDE,

the first son of Lemuel, was born in Shrewsbury, Mass., Sept. 28, 1794, but removed to Reading with his parents and there resided from 1797 to 1809. He served an apprenticeship in the office of the *Vt. Republican* at Windsor Vt. In Feb. 1815, he began his business life by printing, in his father's blacksmith shop at New Ipswich, N. H., an edition of the New Testament. He sold to the N. H., Bible Society 1000 copies of this Testament, the first of any part of the Bible ever printed in N. H.



He subsequently published at Brattleboro, Vt., a weekly newspaper, entitled, "The Vermont Yeoman," and at Windsor, Vt. from 1817 to Jan. 5, 1835, in association with other parties, published the "*Vermont Republican and American Yeoman*," and manufactured books for Boston and N. Y. publishers. Since Dec. 1834, he has resided at Claremont, N. H., and for over 24 years acted as agent and manager of the "Claremont Manufacturing Co.," for four years published the "Claremont Eagle," and now at the age of 80 amuses himself with type-setting.

Mr. Ide's second son, William B., took an active and conspicuous part in the "Bear Flag" enterprise in California. The facts in the case were, that the Spanish Governor, Don Castro, became jealous of the growing *Yankee influence* of the new settlers flocking into the Californias from the states, and about a year previous to the U. S. war with Mexico, he issued a proclamation, warning those Yankee emigrants to leave the country, threatening their *extermination*, if, after a certain day named, they were to be found within the limits of his jurisdiction. Thereupon about 100 of those emigrants, including a few of the earlier English settlers, formed, or associated themselves into an organized, mounted and equipped military company, the command of which was given to Mr. Ide by ballot of its members. Thereupon, principally by Mr. Ide's contrivance, the "Bear Flag" was instituted, a "Pronunciamento," signed by him, issued, setting forth the grounds of their resistance to Gov. Castro's exterminating proclamation; and under this rudely and hastily manipulated flag and pronunciamento, the said company made a raid upon the Governor's fort and head-quarters, took it and the Governor's family by surprise in the night. Don Castro and his men having barely time to make their escape, leaving a good equipment of cannon, small arms and ammunition behind, and his family as hostages for his future good behaviour. As the nominal governor of Upper and Lower California under Spanish *pronunciamento-law*, Mr. Ide held possession of that territory, until in 1846, in his said capacity, he formally delivered it over to the authorized agent or officer of the United States, Commodore Shrubrick.

Mr. Ide afterwards followed the mining operations successfully for a season, accumulating a handsome property in real estate, held the office of Judge of Probate and several others, under the new state government, and died at Monroeville, Cal., Dec. 19, 1852, aged 56.

#### THE SWAIN FAMILY.

Nathaniel Swain, John Swain and another brother, came to this country from Scotland and settled in Massachusetts, and from these three brothers all the people in this country bearing that sir-name have descended.

Nathaniel Swain, (2d,) son of John, emigrated to Reading, Vt., from Reading, Mass., in 1785, and settled upon and cleared up a



farm of 250 acres, being the farm now known as the "Swain place," bought of Henry Henderson, being the "right or share of" "land formerly belonging to Simon Stevens by virtue of his name" "being in the original charter of said township." This Simon Stevens resided at Charlestown, N. H., and subsequently at Springfield Vt., and was a notable "Yorker" in his day.

Mr. Swain had three sons, Nathaniel, Jr., John and James and four daughters, Lydia, who married Aaron Townsend of Reading, Sarah, who married Nathaniel Pratt, Jr., one who married Mr. Hart Massey and was one of the earliest settlers of Jefferson Co., N. Y., and another who married a Mr. Goodall. Mr. S. was a farmer, died in Reading in 1850, aged 81. Of his children;

Nathaniel Swain, (2d,) lived and died on the old homestead in Reading. He married Charlotte Sherwin, daughter of Samuel Sherwin, one of the early settlers of the town.

His children were, Alva, Mary, deceased, Nathaniel, Lois, Betsey, Charlotte, Marcus, John F., Lewis and Oliver, who all attained full age, though but four of the number now are alive.

Alva married Mary Ann Collins, had four children, Charles H. who now lives in Claremont, N. H., Elbridge, Lewis and Charlotte, the latter deceased.

Charlotte married Timothy B. Collins, died 1869 leaving one child, Mrs. Ellen Fales of Sharon Vt.

Lewis married Lucia Garvin by whom he had two children, Mary and Lewis. This family are entirely deceased.

Col. John F. Swain was a farmer and resided for many years where E. Pomroy now lives. His house, when built, was regarded as a *grand mansion*. He rose to the rank of Colonel in the State Militia. He now resides at Papillion, Neb. He married first, Lydia Davis, by whom he has now living three children, the oldest of whom is Mrs. Payson Pierce of Woodstock; his second wife was Mrs. Sophronia Ferrin, who has two children.

Marcus Swain, M. D, practiced his profession about one year at Felchville, then for many years at Essex, Vt., for 15 years in Wisconsin, and now resides and practices at Englewood near Chicago, Ill., m. Charlotte Woodbury.

Marcus had five children, four now living, the eldest, Dr. Edgar Swain, now a prominent surgeon dentist of Chicago; served with distinction in the late war, and received the rank of Colonel.

Oliver Swain, M. D. pursued his studies with Dr. Phelps of Windsor Vt., and practiced at Colchester Vt. He was skillful as a surgeon, but died at the early age of 35 years.

Betsey married Wm. P. Felton and resides at Jacksonville, Ill., has two children, Sarah and Byron.

Lois, m. Edward Putnam, of Glen's Falls, N. Y., the well known stage proprietor.

Nathaniel m. Lucia Stow, of Woodstock, was a farmer, and resided where Edgar Stearns now lives, and also where U. Allard

now lives, and at So. Reading the last fifteen years of his life, where he died July 30, 1860.

His son, Albert Nathaniel, has been for the last 17 years the editor and proprietor of the *Bellows Falls (Vt.) Times*, a weekly newspaper. He has been postmaster at Bellows Falls from June 1861 to Sept. 1873. He was a member of the Constitutional Convention, (from Rockingham,) in 1870, and is the present representative of Rockingham in the State Legislature. He married Susan W. Putnam of Brattleboro, Vt., Nov. 13th, 1856.

Lorette L. Swain m. Joseph S. Whitten, Feb. 1852, who died Jan. 3, 1870, and March 20, 1872, m. M. E. Goddard, Esq.

Mrs. Lucia S. Swain, now in her 74th year, resides with her son, Albert N., at Bellows Falls, and is remarkably vigorous for a lady of her age. She will be remembered as one of the early time school teachers of Reading.

Thayer, Chas. L., farmer, m. Martha Hemmenway.

Thomas, Roswell, farmer.

Thomas, Frank, farmer.

Thomas, Addison, farmer, m. Mrs. — Davis.

Thomas, Chas. B., farmer, m. Mary Metcalf.

Thomas, Hiram F., was b. in Weathersfield, Feb. 3, 1836, but the larger part of his minority was spent with his uncle, Benjamin Reed, Esq., at Waitsfield, Vt. After attaining his majority he became interested in mercantile pursuits, and his popular, agreeable manners peculiarly qualified him for success in his chosen pursuit. His business life in Reading commenced in August, 1866, as a member of the well known firm of Thomas, Baldwin & Thornton, and he continued with that firm until his death, Aug. 25, 1871.

He was chosen to many positions of trust and honor and in 1870 was the representative of the town in the State Legislature.



MR. WILLIAM TOWNSEND

was born in Lynfield, Mass., September 8, 1780, and came with his father's family to Reading, Vermont, when a boy, where he spent the balance of his life, save from 1836 to 1857, which he passed in Norwich, Vermont. He was of revolutionary memory, his father and brother, Daniel Townsend, engaging in deadly conflict for liberty, the latter sacrificing his life in the early part of the struggle.

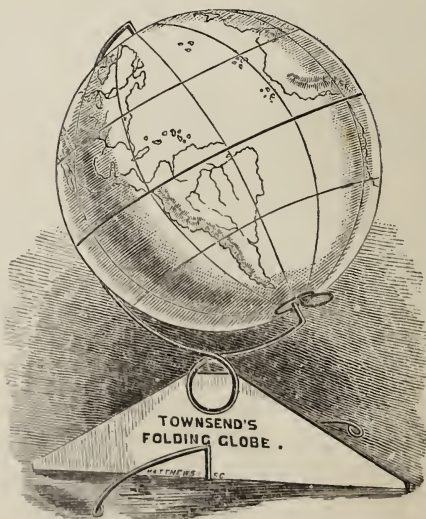
He was married to his first wife, Susanna Smith of Wilton, N. H., Jan. 1, 1806, who died at the early age of 36 years, in 1820. His second wife was Hannah G. Bigelow, who is now living at the age of 79. He had a large family of children ten of whom still survive. He was a very kind and benevolent man. Was ever so ready to grant a favor to his neighbors that his name was justly called "Accommodation." His many virtues, social qualities and musical talent, gained him a large circle of friends whom he loved till the close of life.

## DENNIS TOWNSEND.

Dennis Townsend, the seventh son of William and Susanna Townsend, was born in Reading, May 8th 1817. He remained with his parents during his early youth. When sufficient maturity of age led him to decide concerning the business of life, he went to Boston and engaged as clerk in the store of his brother Elmer, where he soon seemed more inclined to develop into the scholar than the merchant. His desire for an education was very kindly and substantially encouraged by his brother rendering him pecuniary aid, though he reluctantly gave him up.

He fitted for college and entered Dartmouth where he remained two years when pecuniary embarrassments led him to leave and engage in teaching with the design of returning to graduate, but circumstances seemed not to favor it. He continued in this his favorite employment, several years, with success both in the South and West. In the early settlement of Cal., he with his wife in company with others, endured a journey of six months in crossing the Plains from Ill., to that land of gold, though it was his fortune to grasp but little of the shining dust. He spent sixteen years there in teaching, and as Co. Superintendent of schools. Seeing the great need of that very useful piece of apparatus, a globe, the price of which might be within reach of all, he put his mind to the task of inventing one. After the most intense thought and great effort, sacrificing time, health and money, the curious, the useful, the beautiful "Folding Globe" appeared visibly, as he had long seen it mentally.

At once he was much gratified to receive handsome recommendations from Presidents of Colleges and others in high standing as educators of youth. Many teachers of common schools are now using it with much satisfaction. In 1869 he received the honorary degree of A.M. from the University of Vermont. He is now in Fiddletown, Amador Co., California, and his globe can be obtained not only there, but in his native town.



TOWNSEND'S FOLDING GLOBE.

ELMER TOWNSEND.

The loss of good and substantial men is always a calamity. Such was that of Elmer Townsend, who departed this life April



13, 1871. Mr. Townsend was born in Reading, Vermont, March 2, 1807, where his early life was spent on his father's farm.

He early developed a strong desire for knowledge. In the snatches of time redeemed from the hours usually devoted to rest or amusement, he began to store his mind with useful knowledge. In the recesses from labor he had a book at hand and soon made the contents of it his own. In the long autumnal and winter evenings he was in close communion with the books which he found in the old library in Reading, which gave a strong bias to his mind.

With his eagerness to acquire knowledge, there also appeared traits of character for the successful business man. At the age of twenty he left the green hills of Vermont, which he dearly loved to the day of his death, and went to Boston to strive, amid the excitements of the city, for the emoluments of talent and industry, where he entered into the employment of Jonathan Forbush as book-keeper. Mr. Forbush soon found his young book-keeper developing into the thorough business man, for after the usual hours of sales were over he would seek out customers and make sales to them. Such traits of character led Mr. Forbush to take him into partnership.

The small limits allowed will not permit of following Mr. Townsend through all the changes which his inventive and versatile mind led him; but it may with propriety be remarked that his quick apprehension and sound judgment led him to make many good bargains with large profits while others were hesitating. His quickness of thought and decision did not often lead him into errors.

The wealth gained by his superior talents he was ready and willing to give for the benefit of humanity where there were claims on a liberal man's purse.

He often said all he wanted of money was to do good with it. No needy person was ever dismissed from his presence without receiving what was necessary for his wants. His benevolence, were it known to the world, would well compare with the liberality of men of larger means who have done much.

In this brief sketch of Mr. Townsend, it should be added that his many domestic virtues shone with uncommon brightness in the society of his family and friends, leaving a rich legacy in precious remembrances to their deeply sorrowing hearts.

Townsend, Albert O., farmer.

Trask, Geo. E., hotel keeper, m. Mary Kendall.

Tuttle, Geo. F., farmer, m. Louisa Jewett, is one of the present board of selectmen. He is delivering at South Reading a course of public lectures.

Twomley, Christopher, painter, m. Emmaroy Amsden.

Vittum, Asahel C., farmer, m. — Cram.

Vittum, Eugene, lumberman.

Vittum, George, lumberman.

Wait, Wm. A., farmer, m. Priscilla Holden.

Walker, Oliver, farmer, m. — Cady.

Walker, Warren, farmer, m.

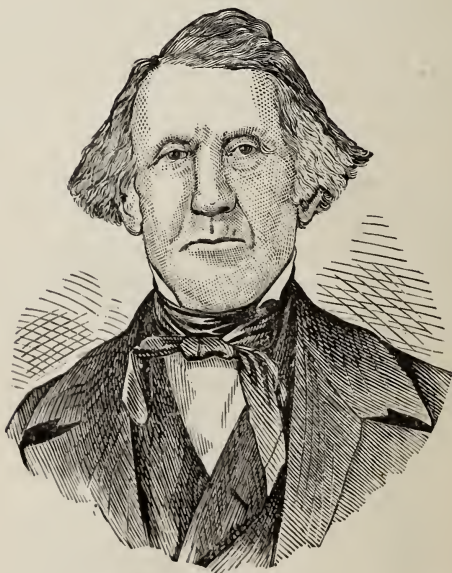
Walker, Oren, farmer and justice of the peace, m.

Wardner, Carlos, farmer, m. — Goddard.

Frederick Wardner, who married Rebecca Waldo, bought in 1796, 100 acres on the "Wardner Hill," and moved his family from Alstead, N. H., to his newly purchased acres in 1797, and established himself in a log house thereon. He brought with him six sons and two daughters. His father, Philip Wardner, who emigrated from Rothensol, twelve miles from Strasburg, Germany, in 1752, subsequently came to Reading and lived with his son until his death in May, 1819, at the age of ninety-two years and eleven months. Philip was a mason, and a stone chapel is now standing on School street, in the city of Boston, which was erected by him.

Frederick was a farmer; he died Dec. 17, 1825, aged 71 years.

Of his children, Joseph died when about twenty-one years of age.



CALVIN WARDNER.

Calvin, b. Aug. 26, 1782, resided on the old farm, built the large frame house and capacious barns now standing, reared a family of six children, and served his fellow townsmen in positions of trust and responsibility, such as selectman, lister, &c. He possessed

much decision of character, quick perceptive powers and was tenacious of his opinions. He was held in high esteem by his neighbors and often was resorted to by them for advice and aid. In politics a whig ; in his religious belief a Universalist.

He m. Sarah Fay Jan. 15, 1818, and she dying, he m. Rebecca Clark, March 7, 1822. He d. Feb. 20, 1858, at the old homestead.

Polly m. Charles Leavens, farmer, of Reading.

Abigail, m. — Hatch, farmer, of Mendon.

Allen, now resides at Windsor, Vt., aged 87 years. He has been a merchant, was for many years President of the Ascutney Bank at Windsor, State Treasurer, and representative of Windsor in the Legislature.

Luther, m. Chloe Leavens, was a farmer and resided in W. Windsor.

Shubael, merchant, resided at Windsor.

James, physician, practiced principally at Reading, Vt., and Plainfield, N. H.

Calvin's children :

Ann, m. Hosea Benjamin.

Betsey, m. Loren W. Lawrence, of Windsor.

Clark, m. Lydia P. Heald, of Cavendish, who d. Oct. 15, 1861 ; again m. to Mrs. Sarah E. Breck.

Sarah, m. Henry S. Story, of Windsor.

Catharine, m. Daniel Benjamin, of W. Windsor.

Fred, m. Mary A. Russell.

Polly's children :

Charles Leavens, of Sheboygan Falls, Wis.

Paulina, m. John Adams.

Mary, m. Aretus Bailey.

Luther's children :

Joseph, Carlos, Azro, Charlotte and Mariette.

#### AMASA WATKINS

came from Hartford, Vt., about 1798, bought and cleared up the "Herrick farm" where Ezra A. Robinson now lives. His three oldest sons were born at Hartford, and the remainder of his children in Reading.

His children were :

John, m. Miranda Darby.

Amasa, m. Sophia Bigelow, who dying, he m. Judith Merrill.

Spafford, m. Sally Parker.

Lucy m. Samuel Royce, of Cavendish.

Zera, farmer, of Sharon.

Wm. m. Almira Hulett, now resides at Towanda, Penn.

Elisha W., farmer, m. Rosilla Robinson.

Lorenzo, farmer, of Ulster, Penn.

John's children :

Urban, carpenter, m., Akron, O.

Lucy, m. A. W. Goddard.

Laura, deceased.

Alfred, farmer, m. Mrs. Helen Watkins.

Charles, died in Waterloo, Iowa.

Spafford's children :

Alonzo P., farmer, m. Mary Fullam.

Betsey, m. Hon. Chas. A. Scott, of Plymouth, a physician of good reputation, and a member of the Vt. State Senate.

Angelette, deceased.

Henry, accidentally killed at Putney Vt., m. Helen Taylor.

Lucy's children :

Laura, m. John Green of Cavendish.

Emily, m. — Gilman of Springfield.

Aurelia, m. F. V. A. Townsend of Springfield.

Frederick.

Norman, deceased.

Edwin W. proprietor of mills at So. Reading.

Zera has one son, named Edgar.

William's children :

Gay, Lieut. Col., and was killed in front of Petersburg, Va.

Laura, m. — Waterman.

Mary and Hersey.

Elisha W. is one of the present board of selectmen. His children are :

Caroline, m. C. T. Fay of Windsor, merchant.

Frank, merchant of Rutland, m. Ada Watkins.

Mary, m. John McCullough, farmer and lister for 1873.

#### PARSON WESTON.

cleared up the farm next north of John Douglass'. He m. Patty Williams. Their children were :

Mary, b. April 10, 1801, m. Laban Hathorn.

Henry, b. March 3, 1804, d. May, 1853.

Curtis, b. — 1806, d. — 1813.

Laura, b. April, 1807, m. Bridgman Hapgood.

Nathan, b. Oct. 23, 1809, resides at Reading.

Benjamin, b. Aug. 17, 1814, m. Lucretia Fullam at Plymouth.

Michael, b. April, 1816, m. Mary Herrick, resides at Reading.

Martha, b. March 2, 1822, m. O. A. Keyes.

#### BIOGRAPHY OF HANK WHITE.

BY DIO GENES.

#### CHAPTER I.

This celebrated humorist was born about 38 years ago. He began to be funny at a very early age. His mother says he never stopped crying from the hour of his birth till he was two years old. Our hero is not a self-made man ; he was born in Vermont of "poor but respectable parents," who had other children, and so he was not the flower of the family, though always a promising lad.



Weathersfield is noted as the place of his birth, but not wholly on that account. Other smart boys have been born there. It is the writer's native town.

## CHAPTER II.

Hank's power of mimicry developed early, and his boyish impersonations of peculiar characters used frequently to set his elders in a roar and bring down the house, or other edifice in which he performed. Even in infancy he used to make up such faces at his mother that she never could keep from laughing long enough to whip him. We have seen his father raise his hand in wrath to give the young Comedian a richly deserved flogging, but one look at the comical face before him would force him to explode with a "ha, ha, ha!" and he would tell Hank to "go to thunder with his nonsense." Hank was well brought up, but he fell into bad company after he left the parental roof. "I name no names," but the public knows the company.

## CHAPTER III.

Hank's "first appearance upon any stage" was at a school exhibition. The tragedy was Pizarro. The personator of that character afterward became a Colonel in our army. George M. Clark was "Alonzo," and Hank wanted to be "Cora's child," but he was too big. He took the leading part in the afterpiece, a roaring farce, and achieved a decided success. The applause put out half the tallow candles which lighted the old meeting house.

Hank studied his profession in New York, spending more money than he is ever likely to get back. He first applied burnt cork to his handsome face in 1859, and the bursting houses which from that time to this have greeted him, prove that he has not mistaken his calling.

## CHAPTER IV.

Hank has a war record. He blew the bass drum in the 16th Vermont Volunteers, and did gallant service at Gettysburg. He got behind a large rock, and, making as much noise as a whole brigade, drew the fire of three hundred rebel cannon at himself individually. Rising gracefully he bowed his thanks and propounded a conundrum: "Why is White Black?" While the rebs were studying up the answer—because he is mortarfi(r)ed—Col. V. ordered a charge, and gobbled up a whole regiment of them. The credit of the success was wholly due to Hank. Hank and his companion in peace or war, Lieutenant George M. Clark, sang before Gen. Meade and delighted the whole camp with their music. When their term of service expired they were honorably discharged, and returned home covered with glory and vermin.

## CHAPTER V.

Like Greeley, Hank, when at home is a farmer, but he isn't at home much. What he "knows about farming" would fill a whole

chapter like this, and is therefore omitted. For the last ten years he has been on the road, traveling through the North-Eastern States and the Canadas so many times that their lines of communication are as familiar to him as the paths of his own cow-pasture. Hank is not rich, but he has lots of rich relations. He is, however, moral, temperate and honest, with a soul as clean as that of many a man whose face is white all the time. He is prudent, and doesn't spend his money for good clothes or poor liquor. He sings because he likes to, and laughs because he can't help it, any more than his audience. His fun is purely natural, from a living spring, and doesn't need a force-pump to bring it to the surface. He was always full of it, and has grown fat upon it.

## CHAPTER VI.

In conclusion, we take leave of our subject with regret. It was our pleasure to know him intimately in early life, and sometimes to enjoy the felicity of "pulling the wool" over his eyes. When we turn our eyes to the lofty pinnacle of fame which Hank has since attained, we feel a measure of pride at his altitude, and these beautiful lines of Longfellow come unbidden to our mind :

"Lives of great men all remind us  
We can make our lives sublime ;  
And, departing, leave behind us  
Footprints on the sands of time "

## OLIVER WHITMORE

came to Reading in 1802. In 1805 he bought of Alpheus Morse the farm now owned by Benjamin Weston and resided on that until 1814, when he bought of Jonathan Conant and Moses Fay the farm now occupied by his two sons Nelson and Charles, and resided there until his death in 1845, having reared a family of ten children. The part east of the highway, purchased of Moses Fay, is now owned by Chas. S. Whitmore, Esq., Deputy Sheriff.

Of the daughters :

Arvilla, m. Bradford Holmes.

Priscilla, m. Joel Holden, and he dying she m. Wm. A. Wait, Esq.

Christiana, m. Nathan Sherwin.

Lydia, m. Samuel Persons.

Jerusha, m. Lyman Cady.

Aurilla, m. Jonas G. Allen.

Zilpha, m. Wm. Wilkins of Alden, N. Y.

Of the sons :

Nelson, m. Lucy Holden.

Charles, m. Lucy N. Hatch, June 5, 1845.

## JOSEPH WILKINS

made his *pitch* in Reading in 1784. His son, Sewall, purchased and cleared up the farm now owned by Rowland M. Wilkins. He m. Mary Wilkins and their children were :

Polly, m. Charles Stafford of Bridgewater.  
 Wm. m. Lucinda Grandy.  
 Nehemiah m. Rachel Floyd.  
 Hannah, m. Calvin Morrison, and he dying she m. Eben Kendall.  
 Alice, m. Jared Nutting, lives in Ohio.  
 Stillman, m. Clarissa Griswold, d. in Alden, N. Y.  
 Rowland, M., m. Eliza Ann Chipman.  
 Mary having deceased, Sewall Wilkins m. for his second wife Abigail Dunham.  
 Their children were :  
 Sophronia, m. Nathan Savage, lived in Whitehall, Ill.  
 Elvira m. Jefferson Chandler, of Canaan, N. H.  
 Lydia, m. John Lock of Charlestown, N. H.  
 Abigail.  
 Olivia, d.  
 Lucius, died in the army.

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Walker, Oliver, farmer, m. — Cady.  
 Washburn, Chas., farmer, m.  
 Washburn, Chas., T., farmer.  
 Washburn, Darwin E., mechanic, m. Effie Buck.  
 Weston, Benjamin, farmer, m. Mary Fletcher.  
 Wetherbee, Levi K., proprietor of steam mill, m. — Cram.  
 Waterman, Julius, clerk.  
 Wilkins, Clarence, manufacturer of chairs and farmer.  
 Wilkins, Wallace W., farmer, m. Jenette Gilson.  
 Wilkins, Alvin F., farmer, m.  
 Wilkins, Henry, teacher of penmanship, m. Clara Amsden.  
 Willis, Edward B., painter and a musician of good reputation, m. — Gates.  
 Whitaker, Wm., chairmaker, m. Mary Greenleaf.  
 White, Hugh, farmer, m. Ella Jones.  
 Whitney, Edwin, farmer, m. Marcia Taylor.  
 Wolcott, P. B., blacksmith.  
 Wolcott, William, farmer.  
 Wood, Norman W., farmer, m. Maria H. Griffin. Mr. Wood has a wide and well-deserved celebrity as a comedian.  
 Young, Geo. W., blacksmith, m. Aurelia Capron.

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The oldest persons now residing in Reading are Mrs. Lucy Stearns who was 97 on the 8th day of November 1873, and Mrs. Mehitable Walker, who was 97 in January, 1874. Mrs. Walker is the mother of Oliver Walker and is hale, hearty and "spry as a cricket."

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